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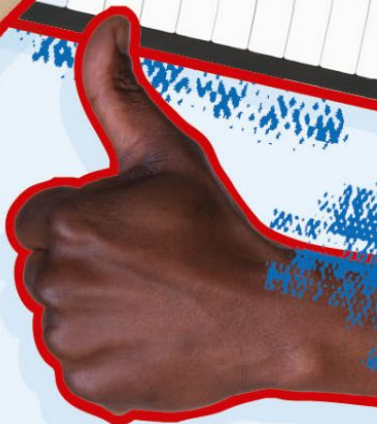
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WOODSHED

VOL. 43 | NO. 2 | FEBRUARY 2022

RING OUT THE OLD...

IF I DO say so myself, *Guitar World* does a fine job — in the Tune-Ups section, especially — of keeping readers informed about some of the new talent that's coming up in the world. You know, new guitar-centric albums, new songs, new bands, new guitarists — that sorta thing. But really, it would probably take six or seven issues' worth of Tune-Ups to accomplish what we did with "A heapin' helpin' of top-notch guitarists weigh in on the year's best new albums, songs, guitar solos, riffs & more," a sprawling feature (and headline!) that kicks off on page 36. That's where we asked 70 respected guitarists to chime in on 2021's best new guitar-based music. As an editor, I pay special attention to their "New artist/guitarist" replies, because these are the guitarists and bands you'll be hearing (and reading) about in 2022 and beyond. On that note, get ready to count how many times two new-ish bands — Turnstile and Spiritbox — are mentioned! By the way, if I were to add my own "best of 2021" picks, it'd look a little something like this:



Damian Fanelli

ALBUM: Seth Lee Jones, *Flathead*

SONG: Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio, "Call Your Mom"; Teenage Fanclub, "The Sun Won't Shine on Me"; Billy Gibbons, "My Lucky Card"; Seth Lee Jones, "Tulsa Time"; Seth Kessel, "Let That Train Roll By"; Cedric Burnside, "The World Can Be So Cold"

RIFF: Billy Gibbons, "My Lucky Card"

SOLD: Seth Lee Jones, "Desiree"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Jimmy James (Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio), Seth Lee Jones
NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: I discovered that whenever I intentionally don't bend strings, I play like a different person — and it's kinda refreshing.

ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD):

The Beatles, *Let It Be* (Super Deluxe) [2021].
As a serious Beatles fan, *Let It Be* was never my favorite, but I seriously can't get enough of this box set. And don't even get me started on the awesomeness of Peter Jackson's *Get Back* three-parter! Honorable mentions to George Harrison's *All Things Must Pass* and Jimmie Vaughan's box set.



DAMIAN FANELLI
Editor-in-Chief

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READER ART

OF THE MONTH

If you've created a drawing, painting or sketch of your favorite guitarist and would like to see it in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*, email GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com with a scan of the image!



ROBERT JOHNSON BY HAROLD JONES



BOB DYLAN BY KEVIN BARRETT

DEFENDERS of the Faith



Vince DiVincenzo

AGE: 65

HOMETOWN: Prior Lake, MN

GUITARS: Fender MP and MIM Telecaster, Squire Surf Strat, Epiphone Casino Coupe, Epiphone Hummingbird Pro

SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Pearl Jam "Yellow Ledbetter," Rory Gallagher "Bad Penny," the Allman Brothers Band "One Way Out" and original slide compositions

GEAR I WANT MOST: Any '58 to '61 grey tweed Ampeg reverb amp



Brennan A. Thompson

AGE: 19

HOMETOWN: Edmond, OK

GUITARS: Kramer Snake Sabo Baretta, Kramer Pacer Classic, various Les Pauls, Boss Katana 50, Big Muff Fuzz, Zakk Wylde wah

SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Cinderella "Gypsy Road," Skid Row "Youth Gone Wild," anything by Peter Green or Dio

GEAR I WANT MOST: 1986 Gibson Custom Shop Edition Les Paul Aldo Nova in Polaris White



Chuck Hillyard

AGE: 49

HOMETOWN: Jacksonville, FL

GUITARS: Gibson Les Paul, PRS 245 SE

SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: New songs by my band, Divided Truth, in the studio

GEAR I MOST WANT: Kemper Profiler



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Cousin Harley in action at Vancouver's Rickshaw Theatre in September 2019; [from left]: Paul Pigat, Jesse Cahill and Keith Picot



Rockabilly Renaissance Man

CANADIAN GUITARIST PAUL PIGAT GETS BACK TO BASICS ON COUSIN HARLEY'S *LET'S GO!*

By Alan di Perna

P“I WANTED TO take all of the sophistication out of it,” Paul Pigat says of *Let's Go!*, the latest album by his rockabilly trio Cousin Harley. But few, if any, would call the disc's 10 retro-rock scorches unsophisticated. Pigat has a knack for crafting dazzlingly tight guitar solos that sit gemlike within well-honed songs that he dashes off with apparent ease.

“I took a little lesson from AC/DC on the solos for this record,” he says.

“And that's to make the solo completely different from the rest of the song. Rather

than just soloing over a verse or bridge progression, there's a new harmonic change for the guitar solo. You haven't heard anything like that so far in the song. AC/DC were always great at that.”

Pigat's approach to the rockabilly idiom is adventurously eclectic, incorporating elements of everything from hard rock to Western swing. A dotting Dutch fan dubbed them “The Motörhead of Rockabilly.”

“I'm not a purist by any means,” Pigat admits. “I've always been interested in taking the parts of American music that I love

and mashing them together. Country, blues, rock... a little bit of everything in there. We're still a country/rockabilly/rock 'n' roll band, but the last few records were very Western swing. With *Let's Go!*, however, I wanted to make another rock 'n' roll record. So this one is getting back to our rock 'n' roll roots and what we originally started with, which are raunchy and aggressive. But we kept a little country tinge to it too.”

By the time Pigat discovered rockabilly, he had already earned a degree in classical composition and paid his dues in

numerous rock bands. But from the moment he heard rockabilly revivalist Robert Gordon's late-Seventies/early Eighties work with British guitar ace Chris Spedding, his fate was sealed.

"That was my very first taste of it," he says. "I fell in love with that and started working my way backwards. I grew up in Toronto, and Toronto had a good little rockabilly scene. But then I moved to Vancouver, and the scene there is what really solidified it for me. There was so much going on. It was a deep scene."

Pigat arrived in Vancouver just as the city's alt-country scene was capturing national attention in the Nineties, thanks to the work of powerhouse singers like Neko Case and Carolyn Mark. "Uncle Harley" is a stage name/persona that emerged during spells in several Vancouver groups, including Mark's band, the Metronome Cowboys.

"My job, in between songs, was to spew profanities at the audience," he says of the latter ensemble. "We used to bring our own chicken-wire fence and encourage the audience to throw things at us. It was very punk rock. We had a lot of fun."

Gretsch guitars, the quintessential axes of rockabilly, were something else that Pigat discovered later in life. "Growing up in Canada, you didn't get a chance to play too many Gretsches," he says, "because every time a good Gretsch would come up for sale, Randy Bachman would buy it. So you'd rarely see one. And the ones you did see were the bad ones."

Eventually, Pigat fell in love with a 1951 Gretsch Country Club electric, which became the basis for a signature model he created with Gretsch master builder Stephen Stern. "It's called the Synchro-Club," Pigat says. "I did a bunch of research on everything Gretsch has made, and I took all the things I really liked. I took the Country Club body. I made it thin like a Tennesseean. I took the aesthetics from a 1939 Synchromatic, and TV Jones custom-made me some pickups. It's a pretty spectacular instrument — that's for sure."

Pigat says that his Synchro-Club was his "go-to Gretsch" for the *Let's Go!* album sessions. But he also played a Fender Custom Shop Telecaster. "And surprisingly," he adds, "the most rockabilly guitar that I own is my 1965 non-reverse Gibson Firebird. It's a screaming monster, but it fits in well with that rockabilly racket."

Pigat's tone on the album was also shaped by vintage amps, including an Ampeg GS-12 and Gretsch Executive as well as a brand-new Fender Tone Master Deluxe Reverb. "Which is surprising," he notes. "I swore to death that they would never

"We used to bring our own chicken-wire fence and encourage the audience to throw things at us. It was very punk rock. We had a lot of fun"

convince me with a digital amplifier, and I have been proven wrong. I think the Tone Master is a fantastic amp."

One more small but indispensable piece of gear for Pigat is a thumb pick. He began using this style of plectrum in one of his many bands, in which he had to alternate frequently between steel and Spanish guitars. "Constantly switching between a flat pick and a thumb pick got to be too much," he says. "I decided to stay with the thumb pick. That's what I've used almost exclusively for the last 15 years. I've completely forgotten how to use a flat pick."

The thumb pick also helps place Pigat squarely in the tradition that links country players like Merle Travis and Chet Atkins with rockabilly pioneers like Scotty Moore. Cousin Harley's music is like an easily digestible history lesson, illuminating the genealogy that links these essential roots styles. With his hipster goatee and retro eyeglass frames, Pigat is like a walking encyclopedia of rootsy guitar styles. Cousin Harley even recorded a Merle Travis tribute album, 2017's *Blue Smoke*.

A true rockabilly Renaissance man, Pigat is also a guitar builder in his own right. He has recently taken to "rescuing" junky old guitars that are seemingly beyond repair or redemption — ancient, beat-up Hofners, obscure Russian jobs... that sort of thing. "It's one way I've been keeping sane during the pandemic," he says. "I never do this with anything that could be properly restored. But I get these old instruments that are basically going to the garbage heap. And I've got nothing else to do, so I'll put in as much time as is needed to get them back into a playing condition and make them into something different."

Another one of Pigat's pet pandemic projects has been a series of remote recording collaborations, via the internet, with a revolving cast of musicians. He calls it the Shut-Ins. "One of the installments of the Shut-Ins I'm working on is a suite for solo electric guitar," he says. "I've got to keep myself interested, and this is one way to do that."



WHAT'S ON MY PLAYLIST



THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

1

"Alice's Theme"
Danny Elfman

I love this composition. The melody is super catchy and the instrumentation has immense drive! I love listening to this while walking or doing repetitive work-related tasks.

2

"Dream Is Collapsing"
Hans Zimmer

I just love how massive this piece is. It has a truly majestic sound that just stops you in your tracks. I find it very inspiring.

3

Westworld: Season 1
Ramin Djawadi

It's impossible for me to choose just one song from this album. I love how it has been put together. Whenever I listen to music, I tend to treat it as a separate activity. I only ever listen to music while I work if I'm doing simple repetitive tasks online. But whenever I practice, create or do something complicated, I like total silence. So listening to music is, to me, a separate full-immersion activity.

4

"Kill V. Maim"
Grimes

I love dancing. It's a great way to stay in shape, and it makes you happy! I love the catchiness and quirkiness of Grimes' music. I've lost count of how many times I've listened to this track on repeat.

5

"So Fly"
Kendra Erika

I came across Kendra Erika because she was keeping an eye on my Instagram stories, of all things. I checked out her music and fell in love. The songwriting is superb, and the production value is just ace. I love great, catchy songwriting, so I'm very excited whenever I find high-quality songs. She's got plenty of them! A true gem.

THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S NEW ALBUM, *THE VIRTUOSO*, IS OUT NOW.

Joanne Shaw Taylor
performs at O2 Shepherd's
Bush Empire in London,
March 20, 2019

Joanne Shaw Taylor

WITH JOE BONAMASSA AT THE HELM, THE HERALDED BRITISH GUITARIST TACKLES 11 AWESOMELY OBSCURE BLUES GEMS BY LITTLE MILTON, MAGIC SAM, ALBERT KING AND MORE

By Joshua M. Miller

▶ FOR JOANNE SHAW Taylor, there's nothing quite like playing the blues. Compared to the more disciplined world of classical guitar, which she played in her youth, blues offers much more freedom. She enjoys its raw, funky feel.

"There aren't really any rules of how you play or what technique you use, just as long as you can input your own personality and feel, and use it as a vehicle, as your voice," Taylor says. "I like that sense of personality and individuality."

That said, the British-born guitarist wouldn't go as far as calling herself a blues writer, at least when classifying her past albums. Beyond her playing, she doesn't think of her songs as blues songs. However, with *The Blues Album*, a new disc of blues covers, she fully embraces the genre — with some help from her free time off the road during the past year.

"I've always wanted to do a blues covers album as a nod to all my heroes," she says. "I picked songs that were important to me when I was learning about the genre, when I was in my bedroom at 13 and had just found this new world that I'd fallen in love with."

For example, Albert King's "Can't You See What You're Doing to Me" was one of the first songs she learned and performed

with her band when she was around 14. "It was a nice trip down memory lane to go back to songs that were so important and influential to me in the early years — and then to be able to give them a proper treatment, now that I wasn't a 14-year-old girl anymore, now that I was a road-worn woman," she says.

Her longtime friend Joe Bonamassa — who produced the album with Josh Smith — also provided song suggestions, including Little Milton's "If That Ain't a Reason" and "Let Me Down Easy." She immediately gravitated toward Milton's singing and guitar playing and felt she could "put my own little spin on it." She achieves this through her guitar, "Junior," a 1966 Fender Esquire she's had since she was 15.

"There aren't any rules of how you play [blues guitar] or what technique you use, just as long as you can input your own personality and feel... and use it as your voice"

"I think having that comfort and having that guitar that I know I can express myself through really made things a whole lot more comfortable," Taylor says. "Once you're comfortable, it's one thing fewer to worry about, and you can just disconnect and think about the music."



Gibson's Cesar Gueikian [left] with Gemini — and Metallica's Kirk Hammett with Greeny

[right] Hammett with "the siblings" (that's Greeny on the right)



Separated at Birth

DID YOU KNOW KIRK HAMMETT'S FAMOUS AND HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT 1959 GIBSON LES PAUL, GREENY, HAS A SIBLING? AND THAT IT'S OWNED BY HIS FRIEND, GIBSON BRAND PRESIDENT CESAR GUEIKIAN? NEITHER DID THEY! UNTIL VERY RECENTLY...

By Richard Bienstock

▶ THERE ARE FEW, if any, electric guitars as coveted as the sunburst 1959 Gibson Les Paul Standard. And the '59 burst known as Greeny — made famous by Fleetwood Mac legend Peter Green, later played by Irish blues-rock great Gary Moore and, since 2014, owned by Metallica's Kirk Hammett, who has made it a staple of his work with Metallica — is one of the crown jewels of what is already a beloved model. With its trio of esteemed owners, heavily weathered appearance (and backwards-installed neck pickup) and coveted out-of-phase middle-position tone,

Greeny is, no doubt, one-of-a-kind.

"I've always thought of Greeny as an anomaly, just as a result of the way it looks and sounds and everything it's been through," Kirk Hammett says. "It's a unique, solitary instrument."

Indeed it is. And yet, the guitar no longer stands entirely alone: Greeny, apparently, has a sibling. And that sibling belongs to Gibson Brand President Cesar Gueikian. "We realized the two guitars have sequential serial numbers," Gueikian says, "and our minds were blown."

Bizarrely, Hammett and Gueikian

uncovered this fact together, and by pure happenstance. "Cesar's my bro, and we're constantly talking about guitars," Hammett explains. "One day over the summer he called me up and said, 'I just got an amazing Les Paul — it's in *The Beauty of the 'Burst* book.' I asked him for the serial number, and he read it off. And as I was reaching for my copy of *The Beauty of the 'Burst* to look it up, he said, 'Wait a second — what's Greeny's serial number?' So I took a picture of it and texted it to him. He looks at it and he goes, 'Oh my god — it's within four serial numbers of Greeny. This

"It's almost like a less-experienced, cleaner sibling. Because Greeny has been around the world eight times, while Cesar's guitar, maybe it only went to both coasts, you know?"

— KIRK HAMMETT

is amazing!"

Gueikian's Les Paul, which he and Hammett christened Gemini (the symbol for "twin"), is serial number 9 2204, while Greeny is 9 2208. But here's the kicker: no other guitars were produced in between them. "I got in touch with [Gibson Head of Product Development] Mat Koehler and the rest of the team, and we figured out that the numbers in the middle are only Skylark amps," Gueikian says. "So the guitars are sequential twins in terms of being Les Pauls and 'bursts."

Which means, Gueikian continues, that not only were the two Les Pauls constructed at the same time, but they were also likely fashioned from the same piece of wood. "Our hypothesis is that they were probably cut from the same maple billet, because the flame patterns are very similar — slightly off — and the mineral streaks are almost identical in the way that they run vertically," he says.

Once Gueikian and Hammett came to the realization that Gemini is something of an older brother to Greeny, the next step was obvious. "We immediately said, 'When are we getting the guitars together?'" Gueikian says.

Not long after, Gueikian and Hammett met up in Northern California for a jam session. Recalls Hammett, "I picked up Cesar's guitar and played [Gary Moore's] 'Still Got the Blues,' because it's the greatest song to play for that syrupy Les Paul neck tone. And it sounded dead-on like Greeny."

Looks-wise, Gueikian continues, "Both guitars are pretty faded. The difference is Greeny has been played so much, from Peter Green to Gary Moore and now to Kirk, who uses it almost every night he's out with Metallica, that the level of fading on that guitar is extreme, where you're now down to the base coat. That's why it looks way more 'lemon,' compared to the honey tones of mine."

Delving deeper into the tone, Hammett says, "Greeny's neck has been broken twice, and so you can actually hear the repairs in its sound. Or at least I imagine I

can. Whereas with Cesar's guitar, the neck hasn't been broken, so it sounds less 'un-adulterated.' There's a purity of wood tone that Greeny does not have."

He laughs. "It's almost like a less-experienced, cleaner sibling. Because Greeny has been around the world eight times, while Cesar's guitar, maybe it only went to both coasts, you know? Other than that, they sound very similar. On Greeny the neck pickup is way louder than the bridge pickup. On Cesar's guitar, same thing."

The emergence of Gemini also helped to unearth some secrets about Greeny. In particular, is its renowned out-of-phase middle-pickup tone the result of an aftermarket modification, or did the guitar leave the factory with that wiring in place?

"That was the million-dollar question," Hammett says. "So when Cesar and I first spoke, we determined that if he plugs in his guitar and flips it to the middle position, and it's out of phase like Greeny, then it left the factory out of phase. That would mean Greeny was likely wired that way, too."

The result? "Gemini was not out of phase in the middle position," Hammett reveals. "And so we concluded that, yes, Greeny's out-of-phase sound was the result of an aftermarket modification. That was

such a cool thing to figure out."

He continues, "So we've been able to learn more about Greeny through Cesar's guitar, and I never thought that would happen. Because we didn't think there would be a guitar so close to Greeny in production. And who knows? There might be a guitar *after* Greeny that has the exact same specs, too."

Whether or not that proves to be the case, the discovery of Gemini is hardly the end of the Greeny story. Gibson recently announced a partnership with Hammett that will see the two join forces on new signature Gibson and Epiphone models (among them, it's been rumored, a recreation of Hammett's famed black 1979 Flying V). As for whether Greeny will factor into their future plans together? "Yes," Gueikian confirms. "Greeny will be a part of the collaboration."

"We've had extensive discussions," Hammett adds. "Because I don't ever want to be an elitist with Greeny. With music and guitar, it's all about the power of inspiration. And I know that guitar is so inspiring for people. And now thanks to Gemini, we know more than we did before about Greeny. They're like two peas in a pod. It's crazy."



Powerful Stuff

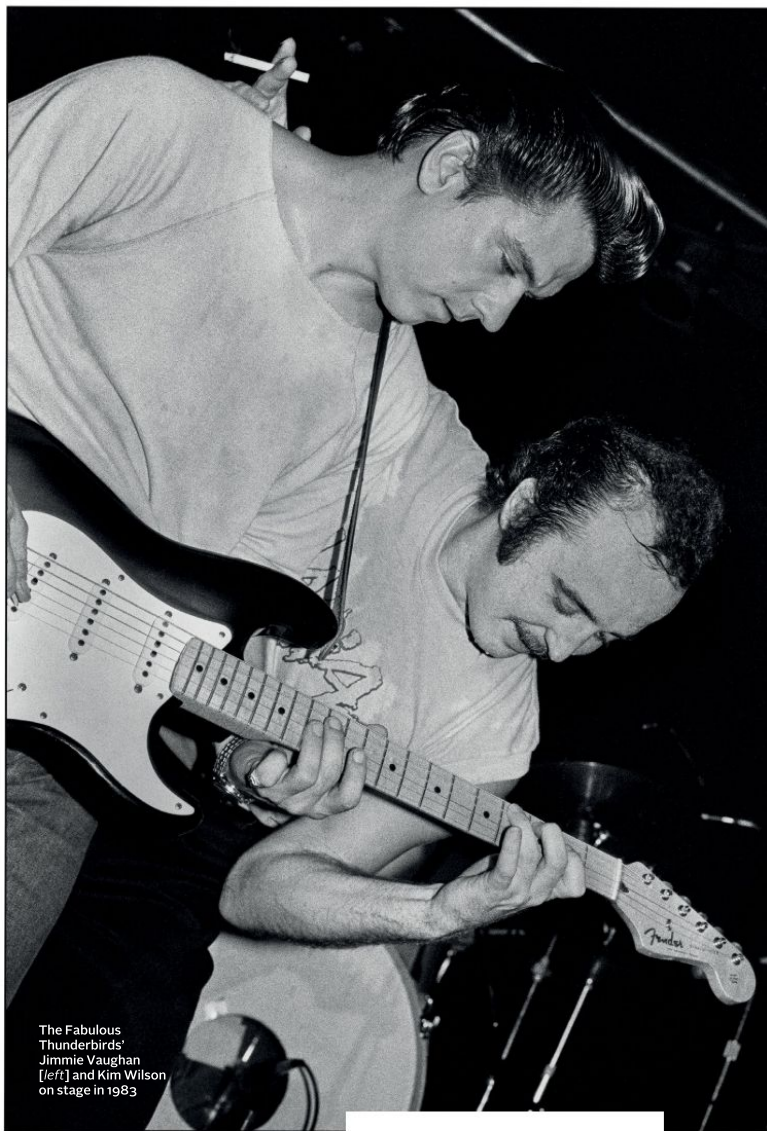
JIMMIE VAUGHAN DISCUSSES HIS NEW CAREER-SPANNING BOX SET AND THE CHANCES OF A CLASSIC-ERA FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS REUNION

By Mark McStea

▶ **THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS'** debut album, *Girls Go Wild*, released in 1979, totally transformed the blues genre. The T-Birds played from the heart of the beat to the sole of the feet — good-time, Saturday night, juke-joint-rocking blues. For most, that was the first time that they would have been aware of Texan guitar ace Jimmie Vaughan. Each track on the record was a mini primer into every facet of the art of blues guitar, whether it be tasteful, economical soloing or subtle comping behind vocalist Kim Wilson's virtuoso harp playing. The Thunderbirds released three more albums before unexpectedly breaking into the mainstream with their crossover hit single, "Tuff Enuff," in 1986. For Vaughan, perhaps it wasn't that unlikely. "We'd been trying to get a hit record for years," he says. "It wasn't like we weren't trying to get into the charts; it just never happened for us before that."

After two more Thunderbirds albums, Vaughan teamed up with his kid brother, Stevie Ray, to make the long-anticipated *Family Style* in 1990. Plans to tour that record came to a halt when Stevie was killed in a helicopter accident that same year, a month before the album was due to be released. Understandably, the accident hit Jimmie hard, and it was four years before he released his debut solo album, *Strange Pleasure*. Since that time, Vaughan has been prolific, recording solo albums and teaming up with a veritable who's who of the blues world for collaborations and guest appearances. Logically enough, given the wealth of material in his back catalog, Malcolm Mills at Vaughan's current label, The Last Music Company, brought up the idea of an all-encompassing career retrospective box set. The result, released to celebrate Vaughan's 70th birthday in 2021, is *The Jimmie Vaughan Story*, a five-CD package containing more than six hours of music with numerous unreleased and rare tracks.

The box set is an amazing package; the attention to detail is fantastic.



The Fabulous Thunderbirds' Jimmie Vaughan [left] and Kim Wilson on stage in 1983

I'm very excited about it. It's also a bit overwhelming, I guess. It's a big statement. [Laughs] It's a gift to have been able to make a living from music my whole life. Anything else would be boring. I'm excited and happy all the time because I love the music I play and what I do. Maybe that was what God wanted for me. [Laughs]

How did you go about selecting the tracks when you're looking back over so many years and such a large body of work?

We just tried to think about everything that had been released and give a flavor of

"We don't have any big secret plans to [reunite], but I've always thought it would be fun to do. Maybe someone out there could try to set that up!"

that work, while also making sure there were enough unreleased tracks to make it interesting for the hardcore fan who may well have heard some of the work from the Thunderbirds. There are a lot of other artists' albums that I've guested on over the years, and it was a good way to pull all those tracks together into one place. Malcolm was the mastermind behind the idea; we went back and forth with suggestions until we settled on the final track listing.

Are there any artists you missed out on working with that you wished you could have played with?

I'm sure I could think of a lot of people if I put a list together. When I think of everyone I've ever worked with, wow, I was already a huge fan of their work beforehand. Just to meet the likes of Muddy [Waters] and John Lee Hooker and all these legendary figures would have been enough in itself. I've always been a fan first and foremost, so it's really a trip to play with some of the people I looked up to for so many years — and a huge honor as well, of course.

There's that great photo of you and Steve as kids playing acoustics. It's a shame nobody thought to record that moment on a home tape recorder, isn't it?

We were just playing in the living room, who knew? [Laughs] But it would have been something special to be able to listen back to it now for sure.

You've been primarily a Fender player since the first Thunderbirds album, so it's interesting to see photos of you in the (box set) book playing a couple of semi-acoustic Gibsons.

My first electric was a ¾ size Gibson with one P90 and no cutaway. Then my dad bought me a Gibson 330, and I played that for several years — but then I bought my first Telecaster from a music store called Arnold & Morgan in the Dallas area. They had a row of Strats and Telecasters — they must have had a hundred — all used. I bought a Fifties Telecaster so I'd finally got what I'd always wanted because of so many artists I admired who played a Telecaster.

These days you're touring with quite a big band — three horns, keyboards, bass and a rhythm guitarist — which is quite a difference from the stripped-back approach of the T-Birds. Do you find the bigger band liberating — in terms of giving you more options, or restrictive because you have to work with tighter constraints in terms of arrangements, etc.?

I've got all the freedom I want, you know?

THE JIMMIE VAUGHAN STORY



It's really nice to have a real horn section; these guys are really good, and the sound of those horns punching out the riffs really hits the listener hard. My whole band is amazing to play with; whatever I can come up with, we can do it. We've got a great understanding when we're on the stage and these guys are able to follow any direction I might want to take off on. It's just great fun to be on the road with them.

The capo has become a major part of your style, although you did use one from time to time in the Thunderbirds. Is that a conscious evolution in your playing or something you just slowly gravitated toward?

One of the first things I ever learned on the guitar was in E — you know, the Jimmy Reed kind of blues thing. So, really, when you have that capo you're always playing in E. You can get a lot of sounds with the capo that you can't otherwise get because your fingers aren't that long. [Laughs] If I'm playing in C, I'll usually put the capo on the F at the first fret so that I can play lead, but if I want to play rhythm behind another player it gives me a different option. A lot of time I don't put it on the key that I'm actually playing in.

Are you still using your signature Strats?

I use a couple from the custom shop. They are basically a Fifties Strat with my pickups and frets. I like the gold one because it's nice to pick up a different thing sometimes, but they're real traditional Strats, really. I'm also using Fender amps again. I was using Grammatcos, which are basically a hand-wired Fender. I still like them, but I've just started using the new Fender Bassmans, which are the same as the ones anyone can get from a music store.

Are you a collector of guitars?

I have a lot of the guitars that I had when I was a kid, actually; well, I have the main ones anyway. In fact, the only one I don't have is that first Telecaster that got stolen.

There are so many great, previously unreleased tracks. One highlight is "Wine, Wine, Wine" with Billy Gibbons; the energy and dynamism just leaps out of the speakers. Something you and Billy have in common is that sense of restraint; there always seems to be so much more under the hood when you take a solo.

I think that's true. Here we are, we're trying to play music — we're not jerking off on the guitar, right? [Laughs] A lot of people can do a lot of things that I can't do, but I don't necessarily want to do that anyway, y'know? I just play what I like and I'm always trying to change things up a little through the years, so that there's a natural evolution of my playing, I guess. But basically the key is to play what you hear or else stop and ask yourself exactly what it is that you can hear and try to find that. I've known Billy since I was about 14 or 15. I guess that's a real long time. [Laughs]

"Shackles on Me" is a great solo acoustic blues piece. Have you ever thought of exploring the acoustic blues area more deeply — maybe an album's worth?

Well, that's like a Little Son Jackson kind of a thing, really. I've done a few things like that over the years. It's a style that really lends itself to playing in E — or maybe with a capo further up the neck. That Lightnin' Hopkins style is something I really enjoy. I love all the acoustic blues stuff, but I'm really into the big sound of my band at the moment and the songs I'm writing are geared toward that bigger sound.

Is the plan for the next album to be mainly original songs?

When I get back from touring, I'm going to try to get busy working on the new album. I'm writing things in my head and thinking about things. I don't want to stop putting records out, and I think I'd like to make the new album mainly original songs, but... well-laid plans and all that, y'know? [Laughs] My intention is definitely to write a new album as it stands.

You hint in the book in the box set that you'd be happy for some kind of Thunderbirds reunion. Do you think that could ever happen?

It could happen. It's not like we've been sitting around saying we're going to do it, but I think it would be fun. I'd like to do it anyway. I think we could do a tour, maybe make some recordings, go back in the studio and see what happens. We don't have any big secret plans to do that, but I've always thought it would be fun to do. Maybe someone out there could try to set that up! [Laughs]

The Bots

MIKAIHAH LEI MAKES HIS SEMI-HOLLOW SILVERTONE 1475 HOWL ON THE BAND'S LATEST ALBUM, *2 SEATER*

By Jim Beaugez

SEVEN YEARS IS a long time — it's the distance between the Beatles' mop-topped debut and embattled swan song, and nearly twice as long as the span between Nirvana's first and final albums. So, what happened in the seven years between L.A. indie rockers the Bots' 2014 debut, *Pink Palms*, and their latest album, *2 Seater*? [Big Indie, 2021]

"I was making music for my side project as well as my solo project, where I go more free-form and experimental with my approach," says frontman and guitarist Mikaiah Lei. "I try to write different kinds of beats and electronic music. Experimental folk and acoustic stuff."

Lei's musical wanderlust returns to base on *2 Seater*, a collection of songs bristling with energy written during the band's hiatus that benefit from those years of sonic experiments, as well as the guiding hand of producer Adrian Quesada, who also makes up one-half of the soul group Black Pumas. The result is less garage punk but no less intense.

Quesada pushed Lei and his brother, Anaiah, toward using dynamics, subtlety and nuance more — turning down and "respecting the frequencies," as Lei says — advice that at times conflicted and challenged his initial ideas for the recording process.

"I had this grand vision of these mountains of sound, just layers and lay-

The Bots' Mikaiah Lei
with his ubiquitous
Silvertone 1475



"I literally got to punch an amp. [Laughs] Nobody in the studio yelled at me"

— MIKAIHAH LEI

ers, and he said, 'You don't really need this,'" he says. "I kept thinking I wanted more dirt, [but] it's just better sounding, technically. It's not competing for anything. The mix sits really well for what the songs are."

That's not to say they didn't experiment. The album is full of spontaneous creativity, whether it's playing drums with chopsticks instead of drumsticks or kicking the shit

out of the various vintage Fender and Silvertone amplifiers at Quesada's suggestion to capture the sound of an abused reverb tank. All in service of the song, of course.

"We were doing that on the second half of 'Tattle Tell,' where it erupts into this thunderous part," he says. "I literally got to punch an amp. [Laughs] Nobody in the studio yelled at me."

Discovery is at the heart of why Lei plays music in the first place. "That's what keeps me obsessed with it. There are so many things to discover; there's so much music to listen to. My friend just gave me a really cool Nigerian rock vinyl compilation record, and I've been getting into that. I find inspiration everywhere."

GOOD TO GO

WHENEVER • WHEREVER



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2021

NEWS | OF THE (GUITAR) WORLD

Lean back, crack open that broadsheet and get ready for the splashiest guitar-centric news stories of 2021!

BY BRAD ANGLE

YOU REMEMBER 2020? Yeah, that sucked. But the world (guitar and otherwise) pulled itself up by its bootstraps (and, ahem, guitar straps) and made it to the finish line. Of course, 2021 wasn't without its challenges. The coronavirus pandemic is still disrupting many facets of life, and political divisiveness is as prevalent as ever. For many of us, the past couple of years have hammered home the fact that change and uncertainty are, well, certain. But, readers of this magazine, there is one message we can all steadfastly rally around: thank god (or the devil, depending on who you hail) for the guitar. Our instrument of choice has been a crucial creative outlet and reliable source of balance, inspiration, connection and respite throughout 2021. But don't take our word for it... take your word for it!

Over the past year-plus more people than ever have picked up a guitar for the first time (16 million, by Fender's recent estimates), and engagement on our own website, GuitarWorld.com, and social media accounts has gone through the roof. We've witnessed tons more six-string fanatics clicking, congregating and commenting to keep up with the whole universe of guitar-related news, gear, lessons, artist profiles, song premieres, live show announcements and much more. As we close the books on 2021, we're taking a moment to revisit the news stories that most captivated your attention online. So, kick back, crack a cold one (or a hot one, if that's your thing) and read on to see what stories united us this year. Cheers to 2022!



LIVE MUSIC RETURNS!

WE'RE JUST GONNA say it: screw Covid. Since the coronavirus engulfed the globe in early 2020, the pandemic has affected nearly every aspect of our lives, from health to finances and so much more. For musicians and fans, Covid-19, and the ensuing social-distancing mandates, also effectively killed live music — halting one of our main avenues for expression, community, catharsis and, for some, income. Thankfully, 2021 also saw the emergence of a few vaccines, which proved effective enough that restrictions began to lift. By summer, live shows had returned — and we were all about it. The Eagles restarted their Hotel California 2020 Tour, Guns N' Roses kicked off their reunion run, Slipknot hit the road with Killswitch Engage and Code Orange, Green

Day filled stadiums, St. Vincent packed concert halls, and stacked-bill festivals including Welcome to Rockville, Aftershock and Louder Than Life featured a host of crushers like Metallica, Gojira, the Misfits and more. If the vibes at these first post-Covid shows are any indication of what's on the horizon, 2022's live circuit is going to be legendary!

2021'S DISTORTED CONSPIRACY THEORY

SPEAKING OF COVID-19 and vaccines... Did you know that everyone's not quite on the same page? (If you can read, hear or absorb information in *any* way, we're guessing the answer is yes.) One of your favorite stories



[from left]
Lego's new
Fender Strat kit

The iconic Boss
Metal Zone pedal
made a strange
cameo in 2021

Gojira's Jean-Michael
Labadie [left] and Joe
Duplantier are among
the many musicians —
pro and/or otherwise —
who returned to live
performances in 2021

touched on this exact topic. One viral theory that spread this year was that the Covid vaccines contained an injectable 5G chip, which governments could use as a tracking tool. In early January a schematic appeared online claiming to depict the diagram for the supposed chip. It even featured a sec-

tion labeled "5G Frequency." It wasn't until Mario Fusco, an eagle-eyed software engineer at Red Hat, spotted the diagram's other telling designations like "MT-2 Gain" and "Footswitch" that he took to Twitter to flag the misinformation. "Here in Italy, people started to share this figure claiming [it's] the diagram of the 5G chip... in the Covid vaccine," Fusco tweeted. "In reality it is the electric circuit of a guitar pedal." The guitar pedal in question? The iconic Boss Metal Zone distortion!

FENDER FINDS A COVID SILVER LINING

IN OCTOBER, FENDER published the results of their exhaustive New Guitar

Player Landscape Analysis survey, which revealed a striking fact about how the pandemic impacted guitar culture: approximately 16 million Americans started to learn the instrument over the past 24 months. To support this new crop of players, Fender launched a new online tool called Beginner's Hub that aims to (along with existing resources Find Your Fender, Fender Play and Fender Tune) enable "new players to enjoy the process of learning to play music... and perhaps go on to create music we all love," said Fender CEO Andy Mooney.

THE GRAMMYS FUMBLE THEIR EVH TRIBUTE

THE GUITAR WORLD lost a game-chang-



[from left] Early in the year, Gibson Brands announced four new Dave Mustaine signature guitars — and we still have some new Kirk Hammett models to look forward to!

Children of Bodom's Alexi Laiho performs in Berlin in early 2017

2021 YouTube sensations Robert Fripp and Toyah Willcox perform in London in 2010

ing musical giant when Eddie Van Halen passed in October 2020. His approach to the instrument was a revelation that influenced countless players. So how did the Recording Academy pay their respects during the Grammy Awards' March 2021 ceremony? They dedicated less than 30 seconds to his memory in a segment that featured archival footage of Van Halen playing "Eruption." Fans, understandably, were not pleased — neither was Van Halen's son, Wolfgang. "I didn't realize they would only show Pop for 15 seconds in the middle of four full performances for others we had lost," he wrote in an Instagram post. Wolfgang eventually revealed via Twitter that he was approached to perform "Eruption" himself, and later explained to *Rolling Stone's* Brian Hiatt that he declined the Grammys' "tone-deaf ask" because it "didn't feel right." In an interview with *Variety's* Jem Aswad, Grammys executive producer Ben Winston offered an apology. "I felt that was an appropriate tribute to [Edward Van Halen], but if Wolfgang didn't, I'm sorry about that, of course," Winston said. "It's such a horrible thing to lose a parent. We did the best that we felt we could."

RIP, ALEXI LAIHO

IN EARLY JANUARY, news broke that Children of Bodom guitarist Alexi Laiho had died. Initial reports stated that the 41-year-old Finnish virtuoso passed away in his Helsinki home on December 29, 2020, after suffering "long-term health issues." Kimberly

Goss, Laiho's former Sinergy bandmate and legal wife at the time of his death, later clarified via an Instagram post that his death was the result of "alcohol-induced degeneration of the liver and pancreas connective tissue." Causes aside, the loss was profound, and Laiho's six-string legacy — which was built on the back of his technical solos, dexterous sweep-picking ability, command of neo-classical scale runs and indisputably ripping extreme metal — will be celebrated for years to come. Rest in power.

STEVE VAI GETS "TRIGGER FINGER" SURGERY

IN MARCH, STEVE VAI revealed he was recovering from surgery to repair a case of trigger finger (a condition in which a finger gets stuck in a bent position). On the *Guitar Villains* podcast, Vai told Tyler Larson that he was "meditating" on a tricky chord that put his "thumb in this really weird position." For 20 minutes, Vai played the chord until "all of a sudden, I developed trigger finger." Thankfully, Vai said the surgery was "very simple," and he was recovering well. So well, in fact, that just one month later the guitarist unveiled a remarkably acrobatic playthrough video for his new song "Knapsack" — performed on his Ibanez Onyx Black PIA guitar with just his fretting hand. Thus proving, once and for all, that Vai at half capacity can still out-shred most players with two fully functioning hands.

EFFECT MAKERS HARNESS THE SOUND OF NOTHING — AND FARTS

2021 MARKED THE appearance of two new boundary-pushing effect pedals. In July, the satirical online entity Chibson USA announced The Placebo, which "feels like a normal pedal but does absolutely nothing." The Placebo was priced at \$99, which bought you working input/output jacks, knobs and a foot switch that "lights up... but it won't change your sound at all." Self-proclaimed "serial silly projects guy" Steve Gadlin also found a gap in the market this year — and staked his claim with The Fart Pedal. Gadlin's prototype lived up to its name by producing a range of convincingly realistic flatulent sounds (thanks to its Wet/Dry toggle, naturally). In October, he launched a Kickstarter to help bring The Fart Pedal to market. Gadlin's goal was \$30,000 — by the time the campaign closed,



500-plus backers had pledged \$90,000 to help create these stinkers.

GIBSON MAKES MOVES

IN JANUARY, GIBSON announced it was making a big move into the amp market with its acquisition of Mesa/Boogie. “We don’t have Gibson amps today, so we started thinking about who is the best... in terms of leveraging the iconic past and leaning into the innovative future,” Gibson president and CEO James “JC” Curleigh told *Guitar World*. “There was only one answer... Mesa/Boogie.” Mesa founder Randy Smith will stay on as Master Designer of Mesa/Boogie, which will continue to manufacture its own product line as well as become Gibson’s Custom Shop for amps.

Gibson also added a couple thrash legends to the family in 2021: Dave Mustaine and Kirk Hammett. The partnership with Megadeth’s mainman includes four signature guitars: Flying V 30th Anniversary ‘Rust in Peace’ Edition, Flying V EXP in Metallic Silver, Kramer Dave Mustaine Flying V Vanguard, and a Gibson Acoustic Dave Mustaine CF-100 Blood Burst. Details have yet to be released about the Metallica lead guitarist’s new series of Gibson and Epiph-one electrics — but that hasn’t stopped fans from getting their hopes up for a replica of Hammett’s beloved 1959 Gibson Les Paul Standard “Greeny,” which was originally owned by Fleetwood Mac’s Peter Green.

LES PAUL’S “NUMBER ONE” GOLDTOP FETCHES \$930,000

IN OCTOBER, ICONIC guitar innovator Les Paul’s “Number One” ax — the first Gibson Les Paul model to be approved by Paul himself — was auctioned at Christie’s in New York for a staggering \$930,000. The heavily-modded singlecut was favored by the late guitar pioneer as his main performing and recording instrument circa 1951 and 1952. Prior to the auction, Les Paul’s son Gene Paul described the Goldtop as “the most historically significant, valuable, pivotal and important guitar to my father... his crowning achievement.”

ROBERT FRIPP WINS HEARTS (AND BLOWS MINDS)

GUITAR TRAILBLAZER ROBERT Fripp and his wife, vocalist Toyah Willcox, proved to be an unexpected source of offbeat entertainment in 2021. As part of their ongoing “Sunday Lunch” YouTube series, the King Crimson guitarist reimaged cover songs from a diverse

array of musicians: from the Who’s “My Generation” and Prodigy’s “Firestarter” to Iron Maiden’s “The Number of the Beast” (cheekily dropped on Easter Sunday) and so many more. Fripp and Willcox went all in for these mesmerizing performances (often sporting costumes inspired by each song). Some were bizarre, some were inventive — and all were exuberant displays of a guitarist having one hell of a great time in the face of a global pandemic.

TRUE (GUITAR) CRIME

TRUE CRIME STORIES are one of the most popular formats out there, and it appears true *guitar* crime is no different — as evidenced by *Guitar World* readers’ hunger to learn about this year’s inordinately high amount of guitar forgeries, thefts, and, thankfully, recoveries. In June, Santa Cruz, California, police tracked down nine vintage Gretsch, Fender and Gibson guitars worth \$225,000, which were stolen in 2020 during a \$2 million burglary of a Marina Del Rey storage unit. In Washington, DC, Dulles International Airport customs agents also had a banner year disrupting illicit guitar activities. In February they seized 36 Gibson, Fender, Martin and PRS counterfeits (with a combined retail price, if authentic, of \$158,692) and later, in June, they intercepted another collection of 85 Fender, Gibson, Kramer, Martin and Taylor fakes (estimated value: \$250,000). The hits kept coming, and in October, instrumental rock crew Russian Circles revealed their U-Haul was broken into in Chowchilla, California, and thieves made off with their (genuine) collection of Gibson Les Paul Customs, Quilter Overdrive 202 amps and much more. At press time none of the gear had been recovered. So keep your eyes out

THE STRANGE CASE OF JOE BONAMASSA’S MISSING GUITAR

IN MAY, BLUES rock great Joe Bonamassa announced that his Fender Custom Shop “The Bludgeon” ’51 Nocaster signature electric had gone missing while on its way



[from left] Joe Bonamassa's Fender Custom Shop "The Bludgeon" '51 Nocaster rests — safely and soundly — at *Guitar World* HQ in NYC

Phoebe Bridgers on stage in September 2021 with another Danelectro (Is this one scared?)

to *Guitar World* for review. Bonamassa revealed that the \$8,500 guitar had been labeled by FedEx as "missing without recourse nor hope of a solution." But that explanation wasn't going to fly. "You say it's missing. I say it was stolen," the guitarist tweeted. "Your own videos prove it was scanned into your distribution center in Nashville and never left." A few days later, Bonamassa posted an update: "Many thanks to all of you out there who helped us in locating JB006. It is back safe and sound and finally on its way to *Guitar World*." The guitarist provided no additional info on its miraculous recovery, except to say it was returned "discreetly" and was "not exactly" lost because of an innocent shipping misplacement.

RANDY BACHMAN FINDS HIS GRETSCH — 45 YEARS AFTER IT WAS STOLEN

RANDY BACHMAN LOVED his 1957 Gretsch 6120 Chet Atkins — so much so the Guess Who and Bachman–Turner Overdrive guitarist used to chain its case to hotel room toilets to keep it secure. However, one day back in 1976, while staying at a Toronto Hol-

iday Inn, he forgot — and his prized guitar was stolen. For four decades, the guitar was in the wind, until, in 2020, Bachman received an email from a neighbor who spotted the instrument (thanks to facial recognition software retooled to look for wood grain matches) in a YouTube video with its current owner, Japan's rockabilly icon Takeshi. "I am absolutely struck right in my chest, like an electric shock," Bachman told CTV News of seeing the guitar again online. As of October 2021, Bachman was set to reacquire the instrument on the stipulation from Takeshi that he can trade it for a sister model of the same year and finish. Luckily, in the years since he lost his original, the guitarist has amassed the world's leading collection of vintage Gretsches — so if anyone has the resources and knowhow required to locate a rare 6120, it's Bachman.

GUNS N' ROSES SHARE TWO "NEW" SONGS

THIS SUMMER, GUNS N' Roses hit the road for their rescheduled North American reunion tour. Added bonus? They treated fans to not one, but two, new songs. In August, GN'R dropped their first new song in

over a decade, "ABSU D" — a hard-charging cut that was a reworked outtake from their 2008 album, *Chinese Democracy*. A month later, Guns dropped the swaggering "Hard Skool," also a revamped song from those sessions originally titled "Silkworms." Does this mean the reinvigorated L.A. crew, which once again features Slash and Duff McKagan, will drop a new album in the near future? Only time (and maybe Slash) will tell ...

KLON CENTAUR TROLL TOLL

THE KLON CENTAUR, originally developed by Bill Finnegan, is among the most coveted overdrive pedals in the world, not to mention one of the most expensive (originals can fetch thousands of dollars). In January, JHS Pedals owner Josh Scott shot for the moon and listed his Klon Centaur #2 on Reverb.com for the outta-this-world price of \$500,000. "If you want the best Klon, it's *this* Klon," Scott wrote in the listing. (His Centaur was actually the first to be built, as



PHOEBE BRIDGERS' SNL GUITAR-SMASH CONTROVERSY

THE GUITAR SMASH has a storied past that stretches back through Kurt Cobain, Pete Townshend, Jimi Hendrix and many more. But, somehow, it still manages to rile people up — as indie guitarist Phoebe Bridgers discovered after her incendiary *Saturday Night Live* performance back in February. During the finale of “I Know the End” (from 2020’s stellar *Punisher*), Bridgers smashed her Danelectro Dano ’56 baritone guitar — which ignited a blaze of criticism in the Twittersphere. CSNY grandpa David Crosby chimed in with “pathetic” when asked his thoughts, but other rock royalty, including Foo Fighters’ Dave Grohl, were all for it. “Let me tell you, it feels fucking good when you do it,” Grohl later told Howard Stern in support of Bridgers’ six-string smashup. Bridgers ultimately laughed off the criticism (explaining on Twitter that Danelectro was in on it and “wished me luck”) and eventually donated the busted Dano to GLAAD’s fundraising auction. In April, the guitar was sold to an anonymous buyer for the *smashing* price of \$101,500.

Finnegan set aside #1 for himself and constructed it at a later date.) Alas, Scott eventually revealed that he listed the pedal “as a troll and to make a point” about the state of overinflated gear prices. At least one good thing came out of the prank — after Music Is Win’s Tyler Larson “purchased” the Klon, he filmed a demo so we could hear the mythic overdrive in action.

ICHIKA NITO’S ONE-MINUTE, ONE-FINGER PERFORMANCE

IN MAY, YOUTUBE (and Instagram) guitar sensation Ichika Nito dropped a stunning video in which he rips through a one-minute song using only his right index finger. In his math-rock-meets-neo-soul style, Nito deploys an array of dreamy, open note-centric clean lines full of tapping, slides, single-finger-picking and more. Nito’s inventive escapades have not only earned him one-million-plus YouTube subscribers, but they also impressed the hell outta Ibanez. In June, the company announced it was venturing into the world of headless electrics with its all-Neue Quest series, including the Ichika Nito ICH110.

TOTAL GUITAR CREATES A “SCIENTIFICALLY PERFECT” GUITAR SOLO

“ALL ALONG THE Watchtower,” “Little Wing,” “Eruption,” “Stairway to Heaven,” “Crazy Train,” “Crossroads.” You know what all these songs have in common? Mint, god-tier guitar solos. You know what Hendrix, SRV, Van Halen, Page, Rhoads and Clapton didn’t use to create their art? Science. Well, that fact didn’t stop the folks at *Total Guitar* from going deep into the numbers and graphs to suss out the formula for what they call a “scientifically perfect... Frankenstein’s monster of a solo.” They analyzed 50 great solos to find the ideal tempo (120 bpm), key (minor), pitch range (2.5 octaves minimum), structure (lowest notes first, “notiest” bars two thirds in), style (fast, shreddy content and melodic hooks) and more. Curious to test their theory? Well, lucky for you they also tabbed out their “Franken-solo” creation so you can give it a go.

FENDER UNCOVERS THE TRUE AGE OF MIKE MCCREADY’S ’59 STRAT

FENDER MADE A shocking discovery when they examined Mike McCready’s heavily road-worn ’59 Strat: it was younger than it looked. During the process of recreating the Pearl Jam great’s guitar for a new Custom Shop replica model, Fender’s Vincent Van Trigt learned that the Strat had actually been constructed in 1960, not 1959. “I was shocked,” McCready told us, laughing. “It was like, ‘Was it all a lie? What happened?’” Fittingly, when the replica was finally completed, it was a true stunner — sporting a Relic lacquer finish on two-piece select alder body, flat-sawn flame maple neck with 1960 “oval C” profile, flat-lam rosewood fingerboard, 21 vintage frets, Custom Josefin hand-wound pickups and more. Also fittingly, these painstaking creations don’t come cheap — each Mike McCready 1960 Stratocaster in this 60-piece run comes with the hefty price tag of \$15,000.

LEGO RELEASES FENDER STRATOCASTER SET

FROM THE BEATLES and Batman to the Simpsons and beyond, Lego has issued a custom build for so many cultural institutions. But Slovakian guitarist and fan designer Tomáš Letenay identified one serious omission: the Fender Stratocaster. So, Letenay designed his own — and submitted it to the Lego Ideas Music to Our Ears competition. The Lego Group loved Letenay’s creation so much that it commissioned it for a production run. The meticulously crafted miniature ax — which measures 36cm tall and 11cm wide and boasts components for strings, tuning pegs, single-coil pickups and whammy bar — arrived October 2021. Lego rounded out the 1,074-piece kit with a Princeton Reverb build inspired by the aesthetic of the original amp. [GW](#)

With reporting from Michael Astley-Brown, Richard Bienstock, Jonathan Horsley, Jackson Maxwell, Matt Owen, Matt Parker and Sam Roche



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2021

A heapin' helpin' of top-notch guitarists weigh in on

THE YEAR'S BEST NEW ALBUMS, SONGS, GUITAR SOLOS, RIFFS & MORE

COMPILED BY BRAD ANGLE, JON WIEDERHORN, DAMIAN FANELLI, JIM BEAUGEZ AND AMIT SHARMA

NOT SURE ABOUT you, but from where we're sitting, 2021 felt like it was absolutely bursting with new music. Yeah, Covid might've slowed things down at first, but eventually we couldn't help but notice the musical equivalent of the Baby Boom — everyone made a pandemic album! And we're glad they did, because we've heard some truly amazing stuff this year. To help us sort through it all, we turned to a horde of guitarists — hard-working men and women with their ears to the ground — and asked them to name their new music from 2021, namely their favorite guitar-forward albums, songs, solos and riffs — plus their favorite 2021 guitar moments, new artists/guitarists and new pieces of gear. There's also some bonus info included, such as some artists' big plans for 2022 and what they're most looking forward to. (By the way, everyone's answer to that last one was "touring!" — not that we blame 'em.) Dig in — and enjoy! —DF



Joe Duplantier (Gojira)

ALBUM: Mastodon's *Hushed and Grim*. Each song has its specific personality and aura. They're definitely one of my favorite bands, and they always deliver the most interesting albums.
SONG: "Stardust Chords" by Greta Van Fleet. The chorus is mesmerizing, and everything from the musicianship to the production is incredible.
SOLO: Brent Hinds' solo on [Mastodon's] "More Than I Could Chew."
GEAR: Neural DSP Archetype Gojira! I worked with Neural DSP for months to put this plugin together. You can get Gojira's guitar tone on your laptop, experiment and find a vast array of sounds and effects.

Joe Bonamassa

ALBUM: Robben Ford, *Pure*
SONG: Keb' Mo', "Sunny and



Warm"

RIFF: Jack White, "Taking Me Back"

SOLO: Eric Gales, "Too Close to the Fire" (unreleased)

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Eddie 9V

Rob Caggiano (Volbeat)

ALBUMS: It's a tie between the Bronx, *Bronx VI*; the Ruins of Beverast, *Thule Grimoires*; Teseract, *Portals*; Carcass, *Torn Arteries*; and Mare Cognitum, *Solar Paroxysm*.

SONG: Another tie! Chvrches, "How Not to Drown" (featuring Robert Smith) and Sleep Token, "Alkaline."

RIFF: Spectral Wound, "Frigid and Spellbound"

SOLO: Joe Bonamassa, "Mind's Eye"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Mammoth WVH

GEAR: I recently had Atlas guitar cabinets build me a custom oversized cab with Ted Weber



speakers, and I'm pretty blown away by it. Earthshaking!

Marty Friedman

ALBUM: Deafheaven, *Infinite Granite*
SONG: Beyoncé, "Vitamin Me"

RIFF: Suspended 4th, "Breakout Junkie Bluesman"

SOLO: Ami Inoi, "Sonata 3rd Movement by Leo Brauer"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Suspended 4th

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: The only thing I constantly work on is the ability to hear and make more interesting note choices — and to try to express them with more depth and meaning [in order] to create fresh context for them.

Cedric Burnside

ALBUM: 662 by Christine "Kingfish" Ingram



"Each song on Mastodon's *Hushed and Grim* has its specific personality and aura," says Gojira's Joe Duplantier. "They're definitely one of my favorite bands, and they always deliver the most interesting albums." [above, from left] Mastodon's Brent Hinds, Troy Sanders and Bill Kelliher perform in Barcelona in 2019. [left] 2021 releases by Mastodon, John Mayer, Eric Gales and Myles Kennedy

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: The Kernal
NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: I don't know what you'd call it, but I've sure been picking the hell out of my guitar!
GUITAR MOMENT: A show at Bridgestone Arena in Nashville — performing at the Volunteer Jam: A Musical Salute to Charlie Daniels.
WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN '22: More music and more shows.

John Petrucci

GEAR: My new Ernie Ball Music Man Majesty eight-string signature guitar. It's a total beast. [It] plays like buttah and sounds like a Demogorgon!
NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: Picking through all of the notes of a sweep arpeggio as opposed to pulling off on the high E string when descending. It sounds a lot stronger and adds a certain snap at the top of the sequence.
GUITAR MOMENT: Writing and recording "Awaken the Master" [from 2021's *A View from the Top of the World*] with my Majesty eight-string and being able to creatively explore a new instrument. The last time I had a similar experience was when

I got my first seven-string in 1994 while Dream Theater were in the studio writing *Awake*.

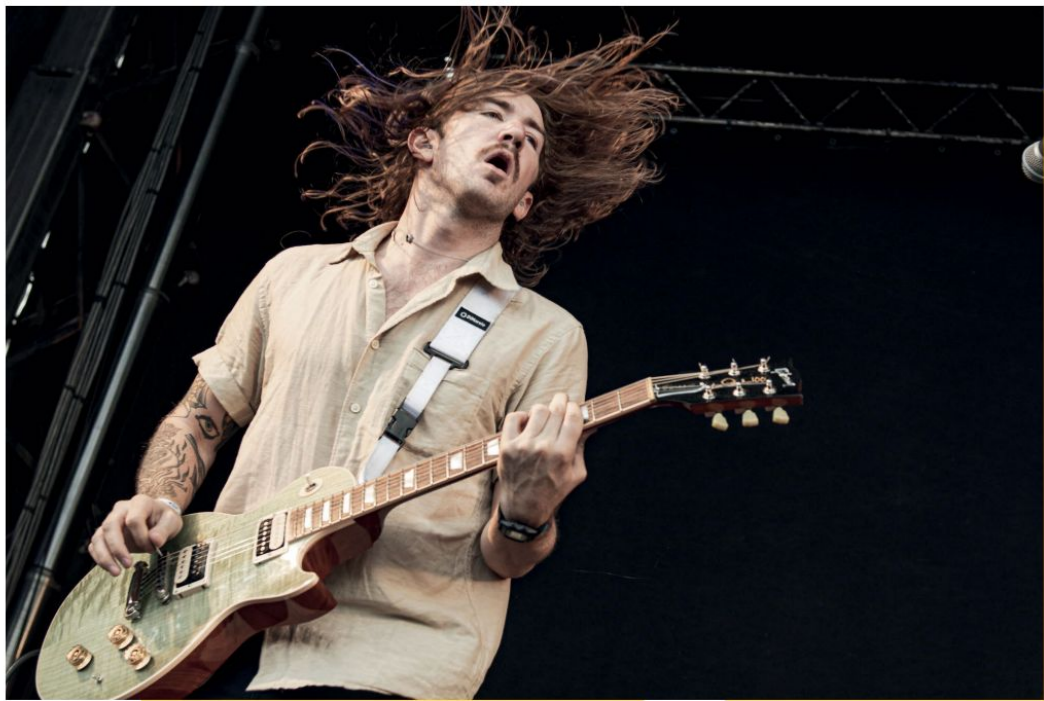
Mike Spreitzer (DevilDriver)

ALBUM: Gojira, *Fortitude*
SONG: Jerry Cantrell, "Atone"
RIFF: That main riff from Ministry's "Alert Level."
SOLO: Carcass, "Flesh Ripping Sonic Torment Limited"
GEAR: Fractal AxeFX III

Jeff Loomis (Solo Artist, Arch Enemy)

ALBUM: The new Alluvial album, *Sarcoma*! Wes Hauch has been in the game for a while, but this is really his first release with

his own band. He's an amazing guitarist and killer riff writer.
RIFF: The beginning guitar riff in "Mediator" by Jinjer. Super-heavy dissonant chords have always been something I cling onto and like. This band is obviously going places, and they deserve every minute of success.
SOLO: I love everything Nick Johnston does. He has a new single out called "Young Language." He plays from the heart and has tons of feel.
NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Stephen Taranto. Check out his Instagram page!
ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD): Whitechapel's new album, *Kin*.
GEAR: I have a new guitar plugin from Joey Sturgis Tones called



What new artists were people talking about the most in 2021? Why, Turnstile and Spiritbox, of course! That's Turnstile guitarist Pat McCrory on stage in 2018 [*above left*] and Spiritbox's Bill Crook (bass), Courtney LaPlante (vocals) and Mike Stringer (guitar) [*above right*]. [*left*] 2021 releases by Turnstile, Spiritbox, Billy Strings and Cedric Burnside

Tone Forge Jeff Loomis, and it's easy to dial in a killer tone within minutes. Check out the free riff if you get a chance.

Will Putney (Fit for an Autopsy)

ALBUM: "Illusory Walls" by the World Is a Beautiful Place & I Am No Longer Afraid to Die. Not a shredfest by any means but [*an*] incredibly tasteful use of interesting guitar soundscapes, tones and effects.

RIFF: The breakdown of "Inhumane Harvest" by Cannibal Corpse, an absolutely bonkers

caveman riff. When the riff shifts lower, it's impossible not to feel a certain way.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Nick Spencer from Greyhaven. **NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY:** Down picking. I'm a rhythm player and have been neglecting the practice, so I definitely put the most work into that this year.

Tom Morello

RIFF: "Let's Get the Party Started," my collaboration with Bring Me the Horizon, has some pretty massive riffs.

SOLO: Roman Morello, "The

Children Will Rise Up"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Nandi Bushell and guitarist Roman Morello **NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY:** Patience

GUITAR MOMENT: Recording 95 percent of the guitar parts for *The Atlas Underground Fire* into the voice memo on my iPhone.

John Natto (Dirty Honey)

ALBUM: Greta Van Fleet's *The Battle at Garden's Gate* is daring in that it sounds like the record *they* wanted to make,

not their label or anyone else.

SONG: "Skate" by Silk Sonic [*R&B duo featuring Bruno Mars and Anderson Paak*].

I'm a very big fan of old soul and funk, especially the Seventies.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: When Dirty Honey were out on the road with the Black Crowes this year, I got to hear the Crowes' new lead guitarist, Isaiah Mitchell. He's just awesome! He has his own band called Earthless; he has *huge* tone on that stuff.



Ted Aguilar (Death Angel)

ALBUM: *Exodus, Persona Non Grata*. Plenty of crushing riffs/solos/riffs — and more solos!

SONG: Mordred's "Dragging for Bodies"

RIFF: The main/verse riff to "Days Before the World Wept" by the Agonist. I love how heavy and groovy it is. It packs a punch!

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Reba Meyers of Code Orange. I love the intensity in her playing and how she can switch it up to the softer side with her acoustic playing. She has a cool voice doing the acoustic stuff.

Reba Meyers (Code Orange)

SONG: Turnstile's "Mystery." It's a sick jam with a fire bass line.

RIFF: The riff in Ghost's "Hunter's Moon" is pretty fire. I'm a sucker for a moody, melodic, catchy, classic-sounding metal riff. It has movement and gives you what you want to hear, but also what you don't expect to hear. I also love Gojira's "Born for One Thing" and "New Found."

GEAR: I've been rocking a lot with the new Neural DSP Archetype Gojira plugin. Joe

[Duplantier] from Gojira put it together and it sounds amazing. Also, the new ESP custom version of my signature guitar, the RM-600.

Adam Slack (The Struts)

ALBUM: Biffy Clyro, *The Myth of the Happily Ever After*

RIFF: Maneskin, "I Wanna Be Your Slave." It's such an earworm and it seems to be everywhere!

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: I did a guitar-riff challenge on Instagram earlier this year. I was blown away. It introduced me to so many amazing players like Philip Sayce, Scott McKeon and Artur Menezes... I find myself more inspired by guys on Instagram than [on] new records nowadays.

Christian Andreu (Gojira)

SONG: King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard, "O.N.E." [from 2021's *L.W.*]. I think there's everything in this song — it's like a culmination of all their musical research.

SOLD: Mine! [Laughs] I'm not used to playing solos, but a French band called Yarotz asked me to participate on one of their songs, "Childish

Anger," and I pulled out something I like. It was a good challenge.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Again, it's Yarotz, who make post/math/punk/hardcore. They are really creative with a lot of rage.

Mark Tremonti

ALBUM: Myles Kennedy, *The Ides of March*

SONG: Eric Gales, "I Want My Crown" (featuring Joe Bonamassa)

RIFF: The intro riff from "In Stride" by Myles Kennedy

SOLD: "I Want My Crown" by Eric Gales (and Joe Bonamassa)

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Mammoth WVH

GEAR: Omega Ampworks Granophyre amp

REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO: The release of Eric Gales' *Crown* [in January 2022].

Eric Gales

ALBUM: *Heatwave* by Eric Johnson

SOLD: The solos Joe [Bonamassa] and I did on "I Want My Crown!"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Marcus King

Jake Kiszka (Greta Van Fleet)

ALBUMS: Cedric Burnside, *I Be Trying*; Ida Mae, *Click Click Domino*; the Black Keys, *Delta Kream*; Joanne Shaw Taylor, *The Blues Album...* Burnside's *I Be Trying* was the representative summer blues album of the year. With such unadulterated and pure blues guitar playing and accompanying vocals, each our track delivers what every guitar champion dreams of. And the addition of Luther Dickinson on slide is exceptional.

SONG: "Road to Avalon" by Ida Mae

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Joanne Shaw Taylor has stood out to me this year [even though] she's not "new." She's captured vocal and guitar-playing enlightenment over a traditional

arrangement.

ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD): The Black Keys, *Delta Kream*

David Sullivan (Red Fang)

ALBUM: Melvins, *Working with God*. Songs like "Bouncing Rick" and "Boy Mike" sound like Melvins from the early Nineties, my favorite period from them. "The Great Good Place" is my favorite and probably the catchiest track.

SONG: Mdou Moctar, "Afrique Victime"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Here Lies Man. We were scheduled to tour with this band, but then had to cancel when Covid hit. Before the tour I didn't know anything about them, but I found myself listening to their album, *Ritual Divination*, over and over. Hopefully I will get to do some shows with them in the future — they are great!

Diamond Rowe (Tetrarch)

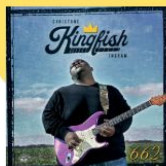
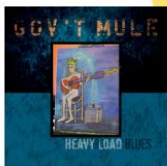
ALBUM: *In the Court of the Dragon* by Trivium. Trivium were one of our biggest inspirations as a band when Tetrarch first started.

SONG: Gojira's "Born for One Thing" is such a dynamic song. It's heavy, melodic, percussive — just everything I look for in a metal song.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Orbit Culture from Sweden
GUITAR MOMENT: Playing INKcarceration [Music & Tattoo] Festival in September. It was our first festival back since the pandemic; not only was it great to be onstage again after 18 months, but it was amazing to look out into the crowd and see thousands of people together again enjoying life and music.

Jon Donais (Anthrax)

ALBUM: Night Flight Orchestra, *Aeromantic II*



"Tosin Abasi [above left] is always innovating and finding interesting new things to do with the guitar, and I think that's so exciting," says Nita Strauss about the Animals As Leaders guitarist. "John Mayer's *Sob Rock* is an album I had to check out," adds Lari Basilio. [Left] 2021 releases by Gov't Mule, Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, Gojira and Greta Van Fleet

SONG: Guns N' Roses, "Hard Skool"
RIFF: Gojira, "Sphinx"
SOLD: Black Label Society, "Set You Free"
NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Spirit Adrift
REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO: Releasing the debut *Living Wreckage* album in the spring — and recording and touring the world with Anthrax.

Arielle

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: Removing the middleman — removing the pedals and focusing on the interac-

tion between the guitar and the amp. It has made me infinitely happier to hear the cry of the amp vs. the pedal. The amp is alive; it makes me play differently when I turn it up. It has changed my playing for the better and makes me want to play more.

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN '22: Vintage tones, loud guitars and passionate music!

Ken Mochikashi-Horne (The Bronx)

ALBUM: Boris, *No. 1* I love the heavy fuzzed-out guitars with old-school Eighties Japanese

metal and hardcore vibes!

SONG: The Rolling Stones, "Living in the Heart of Love." RIP, Charlie Watts!

RIFF: Boris, "Non Blood Lore." The fast riff before the chorus is so rad! Very Eighties Japanese metal.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Killer Hearts. Their guitarist, Brandon Barger, is an old-school-style shredder.

NEW GEAR: Anything by Daredevil Pedals. Keep your eye out for them in 2022!

Myles Kennedy

ALBUM: *Renewal* by Billy Strings

RIFF: "Horribly Right" by Mammoth WVH

SOLD: "Make It Rain" by Warren Haynes of Gov't Mule

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: A.J. Ghent
ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD): Blackberry Smoke, *You Hear Georgia* [2021]

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: Still refining playing "outside" — without sounding like I'm trying to take the listener on a jazz odyssey!

REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO: I will



continue touring my album, [2021's] *The Ides of March*. The next Slash ft. Myles Kennedy & the Conspirators release and tour will happen, as well as making record number seven with Alter Bridge.

Nergal (Behemoth, Me and That Man)

ALBUM: Iron Maiden's *Senjutsu* — no question about that!
SONG: "Atone" by Jerry Cantrell. I'm a big Alice in Chains fan and I've been listening to his solo record; it's a confirmation that this guy is Alice in Chains. He can swap vocalists and still sound like Alice in Chains!
RIFF: The opening/main riff of Jerry Cantrell's "Atone."
NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Unto Others. I followed those guys for quite some time when they had a different name, Idle Hands, which they had to change. I think what they do is quite unique. It's heavy but new

wave-ish.

REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO: I'm dying to finally release the new Behemoth album!

Nita Strauss

ALBUM: I'm a huge Dream Theater and Liquid Tension Experiment fan — so it was so exciting to finally get *LTE3* [featuring John Petrucci, Jordan Rudess, Mike Portnoy and Tony Levin]. The album lived up to every ounce of hype!
SONG: "Obsolete" by Of Mice & Men. It's a perfect blend of heavy [and] catchy.
RIFF: Animals As Leaders, "Monomyth." Tosin [Abasi] is always innovating and finding interesting new things to do with the guitar, and I think that's so exciting.
REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO: I have my second [as-yet-untitled] album coming out. We'll finish recording the next Alice Cooper album, and we'll have some

tours lined up between Alice and my solo band. It'll be nice to have a busy year again!

Jake Bowen (Periphery)

ALBUM: Between the Buried and Me's *Colors II*. Paul [Wagoner] and Dustie [Waring] are such monster players.

SONG: "40 Stories" by Alluvial. Wes Hauch is one of the greatest living guitar players.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Mansur Brown, a multi-instrumentalist from the UK. I'd say his music is for fans of chill-hop and hip-hop beats, but he also fuses jazz and ambient textures into his arrangements — really cool stuff.

Scott Holiday (Rival Sons)

ALBUM: [I'm a] big fan of José González and Ty Segal. González's *Local Valley* is beautiful; [he] always creates an inviting environment with a sense of discovery. This one is no different: always minimalist and warm with beautiful guitar tones, melodies and rhythms. And Ty Segal's *Harmonizer* — Ty knows his way around texture. There's a bit more keyboard adventures on this one, but there's still plenty of gritty, fuzzy emotional guitar all over it. This man holds the filthy frenetic garage rock torch high, and I love it.

SONG: Anderson .Paak, "Fire in the Sky"

SOLO: I like the end solo John Mayer gives us in "I Guess I Just Feel Like."

ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD): Paul McCartney, *McCartney III Imagined*

Mark Holcomb (Periphery)

ALBUM: Archspire, *Bleed the Future*. Everything this band does is nuts and over the top, guitar-wise, and I love it. It renders almost all other tech-death metal bands kind of useless because they do everything tastier and faster.

SONG: Sleep Token, "The Love You Want"

SOLO: Animals As Leaders, "Monomyth." I feel like Animals As Leaders are kind of like Neo at the end of *The Matrix* at this point — everything in bullet-time.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Olly Steele
ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD): John Mayer, *Sob Rock*
WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN '22: *Periphery V*. We've got a lot planned for the year and the material we've written thus far is a step above [2019's] *Periphery IV* [Hail Stan].

Whitney Petty (Thunderpussy)

SONG: "High and Lonesome" by Robert Plant and Alison Krauss
NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: I recently discovered SUSU from New York City. We had the pleasure of playing with them in Brooklyn and they brought the house down! Incredible stage presence and really rocking music. I'm a big fan of choreography onstage and they crush it.

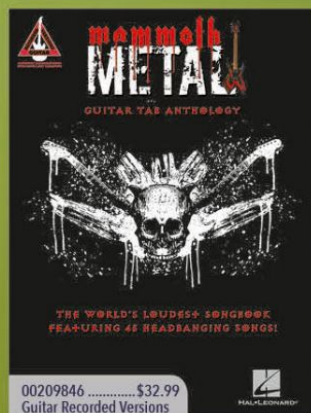
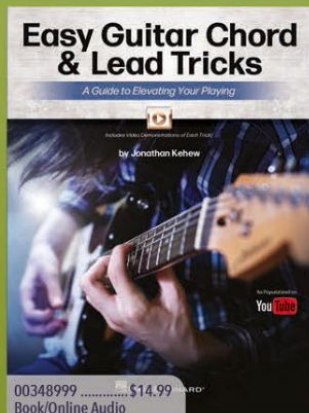
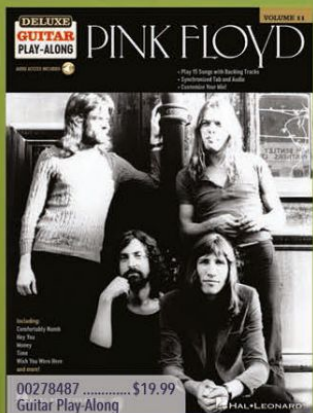
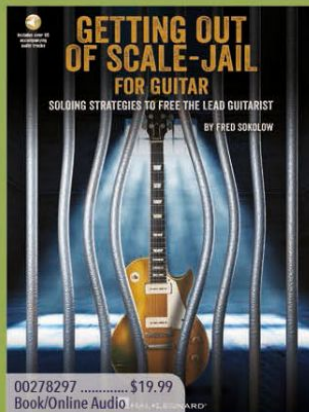
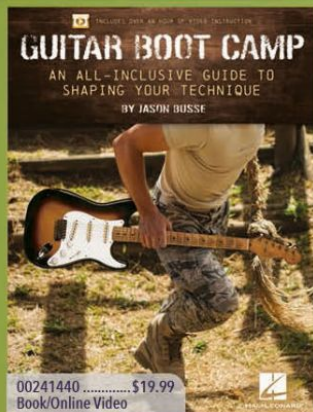
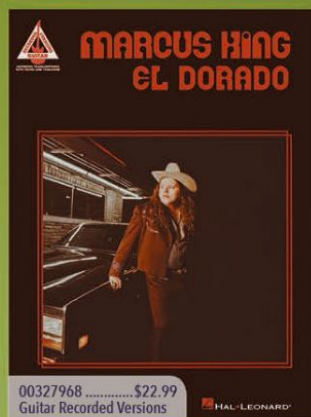
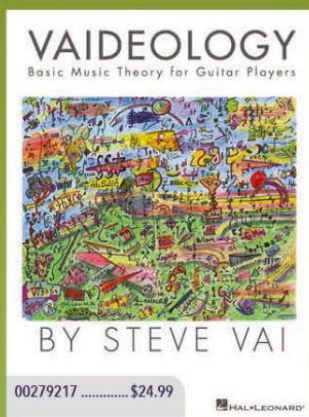
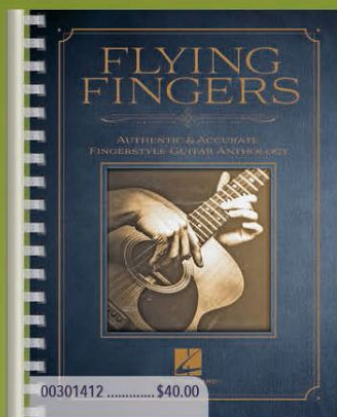
Zach Person

ALBUM: *Outlier* by Emily Wolfe is a fantastically dirty and raucous album stacked with catchy, beautiful melodies [over] heavy, guitar-driven riffs.

SONG: "Life Spins Madly On" by Ray Goren. Ray is an insanely talented musician. One search on YouTube and you'll see all he's accomplished in his 21 years on this planet.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: BLK ODYSSEY is a fairly new project out of Austin founded by the artist/producer/songwriter Sam Houston. It's an eclectic blend of neo-soul, funk, hip-hop and rock fundamentals that embodies and expresses the narrative of the African-American experience.

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Ben Hutcherson (Khemmis)

ALBUM: The Black Dahlia Murder, *Verminous*

SONG: Killer Be Killed, "Deconstructing Self-Destruction"

RIFF: The intro to Spectral Wound's "Frigid and Spellbound"

SOLO: Alustrium, "This Hollow Ache"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Atræ Bilis

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN '22: Live shows with Khemmis and Glacial Tomb and a new Glacial Tomb album. Maybe even some more Khemmis music!

Chris Buck

ALBUM: Foo Fighters, *Medicine at Midnight*. I wasn't an especially devout Foos fan growing up, but in recent years, they've hardly put a foot wrong, even when they step out with something a little unusual like "Shame Shame." I've always

loved the interplay between Chris Shiflett and Pat Smear, two underrated guitar players.

SONG: Kings of Leon's "100,000 People" has a real dance-hall understated elegance and glamor that I was hooked on when it came out.

SOLO: "Ides of March" by Myles Kennedy

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Black Pumas

Nili Brosh

ALBUM: Mastodon's *Hushed and Grim*. They have such a killer catalog of great stuff to choose from, but this might be my new favorite of theirs.

SONG: Steve Vai's "Knapsack." It's another one that doesn't even need explaining, but beyond the creative aspects of it, the fact that he wrote it to be able to play through an injury is something that speaks to me on a personal level.

RIFF: There was something Angel Vivaldi put on his social media called "Second Tapping Riff." I thought it was a killer/progressive use of tapping; clearly he's been making the



"I Want My Crown" by Eric Gales (featuring Joe Bonamassa) gets Mark Tremonti and Alex Skolnick's vote for 2021's best guitar solo. [left] 2021 releases by Alluvial, Jerry Cantrell and Emily Wolfe

most out of the Covid period!

SOLO: Brent Hinds' solo on "Sickle and Peace" from Mastodon's new album.

Karl Sanders (Nile)

ALBUM: Cannibal Corpse, *Violence Unimagined*. Hell, yes, Erik Rutan! The guitars on this record are exactly what metal guitars should be. Raw, pure, deadly, untamed and killing it.

SONG: "Condemnation Contagion" by Cannibal Corpse

RIFF: Carcass, "Dance of Ixtab"

SOLO: The acoustic solo Rusty Cooley did on "The Evil Inherent in All of Us" from the new Saurian album. It's sheer African voodoo exorcism shredding. I could listen to it all day and it still makes my head spin around.

GUITAR MOMENT: It was a mere, unassuming 30 seconds of a

video clip of Jeff Loomis showing in detail how he holds his pick. But it made a mountain of difference.

Nick Johnston

SONG: I really love "Carolina" by Night Traveler. I thought it was a cool blend of styles. The watery-chorus sort of guitar tone feels special. The groove, the vocals, bass playing and

overall production are spot-on. **RIFF:** “More Than I Could Chew” by Mastodon has a cool big fat riff. This song sort of showcases what I always liked about the band.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Night Traveler. I’d like to tour with these guys!

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN ‘22: I’m hoping to get back out doing clinics with Schecter, release the second Archival record with Ben [Ragan] and wrap the writing for my seventh solo record. So much stuff going on, but that’s the way I like it. Keeps me out of trouble!

Lari Basilio

ALBUM: John Mayer’s *Sob Rock!* This is an album I had to check out; I love his approach to arrangements, guitar solos and tones. The production is impeccable and the mix is so good. It’s a masterpiece!

SONG: “Shot in the Dark” by John Mayer. I love how he builds his songs, and this one is so well crafted, starting with a catchy Eighties riff and a great melody.

RIFF: “Animal” by Architects. This riff is one of those that stick to your mind forever, which proves that it’s very good! The album is great and well produced.

SOLO: I love the first John Petrucci solo on “The Passage of Time” from Liquid Tension Experiment’s new album. It’s so melodic and played with such feeling and expression, making us listeners enter another dimension.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Matteo Mancuso — amazing phrasing and exquisite technique.

Laura Jane Grace (Against Me!)

ALBUM: Amyl and the Sniffers, *Comfort to Me*. But I also think the new Wallflowers album, *Exit Wounds*, deserves mention. I’ve never considered myself a Wallflowers fan, but that album is fantastic.

SONG: “Murder at the Bingo

Hall” by Amigo the Devil **RIFF:** Every riff from every song on the new Slant album. That album is a shredder. Tough as nails, like chewing glass. **SOLO:** “Cranium” by Slothrust **NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST:** Lande Hekt. Listen to *Going to Hell*. It’s phenomenal.

Frank Turner

ALBUM: *21st Century Love Songs* by the Wildhearts **SONG:** “The Last Man on Earth” by Grace Petrie **RIFF:** “Planet Shit” by Every Time I Die

SOLO: “Not Nearly Done” by Heavy Meds **NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST:** Pet Needs — a sensational band.

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN ‘22: A new album and a ton of touring. Like, a ridiculous amount of touring.

Jim Adkins (Jimmy Eat World)

ALBUM: *Tonic Immobility* by Tomahawk

SONG: “Days Like These” by Low

RIFF: “Disorder” by Evile **SOLO:** “To Be Waiting” by Dino-saur Jr.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: PLOSIVS

Téa Campbell (Meet Me @ The Altar)

ALBUM: *Eternal Blue* by Spiritbox had some really refreshing riffs and made it to the top of my list. **SONG:** “Silk Chiffon” by MUNA has every vibe I’m in love with.

RIFF: “Dad Vibes” by Limp Bizkit. That song goes so hard! **NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST:** LÖLÖ **NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY:** I finally got pick scrapes down, and I use them for everything now.

GUITAR MOMENT: While recording our latest EP, *Model Citizen*, I figured out that using a drumstick as a pick during a pickslide makes a really unique sound — and it was a funny discovery because I looked stupid rubbing a drumstick up and down the neck.

Charlie Starr (Blackberry Smoke)

ALBUM: Billy Strings, *Renewal* **SONG:** The Rolling Stones, “Trouble’s A’ Comin’”

RIFF: Billy Gibbons, “My Lucky Card”

SOLO: Warren Haynes, “All Rise Again” (by Blackberry Smoke)

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Billy Strings **ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD):** My youngest son discovered Oasis, so we listened to *What’s the Story, Morning Glory* every single day...

GUITAR MOMENT: They all happened during our summer tour with Allman Betts Band and the Wild Feathers. On any night, there were as many as seven guitar players on stage at once. It was ridiculous!

Lilly Hiatt

ALBUM: Faye Webster, *I Know I’m Funny Ha Ha*

SONG: Tre Burt, “Solo”

GUITAR MOMENT: Doing small solos on my recent album, *Lately*.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Amythyst Kiah

Devon Allman (Allman Betts Band)

ALBUM: 662 by Christone “Kingfish” Ingram

SONG/SOLO: “Wild Blue” by John Mayer

RIFF: “The Writing on the Wall” by Iron Maiden

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Celisse

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN ‘22: A new album from the Allman Betts Band, a solo instrumental album [*that’s been*] two years in the making — and new releases on my label, Create Records. **GUITAR MOMENT:** Jamming with Lukas Nelson, Nathaniel Rateliff, Larkin Poe and Jewel at the Telluride festival. What a gas!

Dave Hause

ALBUM: My Morning Jacket, *My Morning Jacket*

SONG: “Jazz on the Autobahn,” the Felice Brothers

RIFF: “Mama Werewolf” by

Brandi Carlile

SOLO: Sadler Vaden’s nod to Kim Thayil in his solo on my song “Snowglobe.” He ripped it — and we were all cheering in the control room.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: James Walbourne from the Rails, who also plays in the Pretenders and has made some great records with Peter Bruntnell.

GUITAR MOMENT: Watching Sadler Vaden and Tom Bukovac play guitar on my new record, *Blood Harmony*, was a masterclass in guitar tone and touch.

Chris Cresswell (Hot Water Music)

ALBUM: *Sob Rock* by John Mayer. An undeniable and fully loaded Eighties shred sled!

SONG: “Cat & Mouse” by Pet Symmetry

RIFF: “Holiday” by Turnstile

SOLO: “Wild Blue” by John Mayer

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Dirty Talons from Austria

ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD): *All Things Must Pass* by George Harrison. It’s the musical gift that keeps on giving.

Buffalo Nichols

ALBUM: Tré Burt, *You, Yeah, You*

SONG: Elizabeth Moen, “Is Heaven Just a Waiting Room”

RIFF: Turnstile, “Holiday”

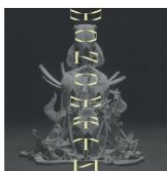
SOLO: Trivium, “Like a Sword Over Domicles”

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Anna B Savage

GUITAR MOMENT: Playing through a turned-all-the-way-up amp for the first time in 17 months in July.

Samantha Fish

SONG: St. Vincent is super cool. I really dig this new era with her *Daddy’s Home* album. When the first single dropped (“Pay Your Way in Pain”), it became



my jam for 2021.

RIFF: Jack White, "Taking Me Back." The riff is super tough and effected.

SOLD: Jonathon Long, "Madison Square Garden." He does it with so much passion and ferocity. I love the song and how it builds and how he controls so much of the dynamic with his slide playing.

ALBUM YOU LISTENED TO MOST (NEW OR OLD): George Harrison's *All Things Must Pass*

GEAR: My newest piece of gear is the JHS SuperBolt. It was a gift, and it screams.

Sarah Tudzin (Illuminati Hotties)

ALBUM: *Twin Plagues*

by Wednesday
SONG: "Fictional California" by Sufjan Stevens and Angelo De Augustine

RIFF: The intro to "Multiply" by Dora Jar

SOLD: The guitar work on Justin Courtney Pierre's new set of EPs is absolutely otherworldly, particularly the feedback solo on "Firehawk."

Aaron Lee Tasjan

ALBUM: *A Southern Gothic* by Adia Victoria brilliantly reinvents the blues with songs about the South that'll shake you to your core.

SONG: *Complex* by Tristen. An album that speaks powerfully on motherhood and the human condition. Great production and psychedelic guitar touches.

RIFF: *Erased* by Ty Segall.

Sounds terrifying. Perfect.

SOLD: Celisse soloing on Yola's *Stand for Myself* during the Newport Folk Festival. There is video evidence on Instagram. The joy emanating from

Celisse and Yola during the performance is as infectious as the song they're performing.

Brian Baker (Bad Religion)

ALBUM: Turnstile, *Glow On*

SONG: "My Town" by Frank Carter and the Rattlesnakes
RIFF: "Hertz" by Amyl and the Sniffers

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Amyl and the Sniffers

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: Keeping it simple, paring back, playing far enough behind to topple the kit.

GUITAR MOMENT: I got to play on a song with Kathy Valentine.

Adrian Quesada (Black Pumas)

ALBUM: Khruangbin's *Mordechai* has some incredibly tasty guitar playing. Mark Speer is one of the more underrated contemporary guitarists; he has a delicate mastery over the instrument but is so understated and minimal in approach.

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: I went down a Kurt Rosenwinkel online masterclass rabbit hole, and it was so next-level that I made out with only about a 4-bar phrase that I practice repeatedly. It has helped me break out of the same old box.

Lindsay Ell

ALBUM: *Cory and the Wongnotes* by Cory Wong

SONG: "It Would Be You" by Ben Rector

RIFF: "Last Train Home" (Ballad Version) by John Mayer

SOLD: "Tell the Truth" by Tedeschi Trucks Band

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Patrick Dronoy

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: Less is more.

GUITAR MOMENT: On one of our first festivals back, I got to jam with Keith Urban. It felt so good to be in front of a live audience, and to be able to trade with one of my friends/musicians who I look up to.

Alex Wade (Whitechapel)

ALBUM: *The Work* by Rivers of Nihil. Brody Uttley did a great job of honing and progressing his chops. He's an impressive player who knows how to rope it in when he needs to.

SONG: "Discourse is Dead" by Architects

RIFF: The verse in Mastodon's "More Than I Can Chew."

The vibe and key of the song is really somber and crushing.

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Spiritbox (with guitarist Mike Stringer). I wasn't familiar with them before they gained a lot of popularity from their single ("Holy Roller"), but once I heard them, I was hooked.

Sadler Vaden (400 Unit)

SONG: "Wilder Days" by Morgan Wade

SOLD: "Muskkrat Greene" by Brothers Osborne

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Celisse Henderson

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN '22: Lots of stuff coming from me on the producing [end], also hoping to find some time to go in the studio and cut some solo stuff!

JB Brubaker (August Burns Red)

SONG: Turnstile, "Mystery"

RIFF: Every Time I Die, "Post Boredom" (the riff at 1:36)

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY:

Spent a lot of time working on cleaning up my pinky dexterity and accuracy. Always a problem area for me!

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN '22: A dark and pummeling new August Burns Red album. Can't wait to share our new songs with everyone!

Pat McCrory (Turnstile)

ALBUM: Sufjan Stevens & Angelo De Augustine, *A Beginner's Mind*. Guitar is the backbone of so many songs on this record. It's like a giant, tender painting that experiments relentlessly with sound to accentuate the gentle voices above.

SONG: Sufjan Stevens & Angelo De Augustine, "Back to Oz"

SOLD: Never Ending Game, "Halo & Wings." I'm just a straight-up fan of everyone in this band. This solo is like Ben Wallace and Synyster Gates got together to write some stuff.

GUITAR MOMENT: The first show back in Baltimore. Way more people came, and it brought nerves out for the first time in a long while. I feel like I blacked out for a minute until I realized I was beefing the song. It was beautiful and cathartic and nothing mattered outside of the gathering of humans.

Alex Skolnick (Testament)

ALBUM: *Side-Eye NYC (VI.IV)* by Pat Metheny

SONG: "The Eye" by Becca Stevens & The Secret Trio

RIFF: "The Crux" by Mastodon

SOLD: "I Want My Crown"

by Eric Gales (featuring Joe Bonamassa)

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Yvette Young

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY: More parts and licks with just fingers and/or hybrid picking.

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT IN '22: The *Moods & Modes* podcast will continue with some exciting episodes. Testament will perform rescheduled tour dates. I'll have releases with Stu Hamm, PAKT and others. There will be an instrumental LP or two under my name,

including some blues-focused music, jazz tracks and possibly a solo guitar and/or ambient/atmospheric recording.

Joel Stroetzel (Killswitch Engage)

ALBUM: Cannibal Corpse, *Violence Unimagined*. Fierce unrelenting riffage.

SONG: Strand of Oaks, "Galactica." I love this band and this tune. Great songwriting, vibes and production.

RIFF: Dee Snider, "Silent Battles." The intro riff is classic metal at its best. Awesome.

SOLD: Gov't Mule (Warren Haynes), "Make It Rain." I've been a Tom Waits fan for many years; it's awesome to hear Warren tear it up over this one.

Zach Householder (Whitechapel)

ALBUM: The sophomore release by Alluvial, *Sarcoma*, is packed with some of the nastiest riffs and solos I've heard in a long time. Wes Hauch has some

of great catchy riffage and mel-ancholic melody.

SONG: Helloween's "Skyfall." It's an ambitious and long piece of music, but it keeps me entertained all the way through.

SOLD: "Enigma of Life" by Gus G **GEAR:** I received a new trans-blue version of my signature model from the Dean USA custom shop. I can't take my eyes (or hands) off it!

Herman Li (DragonForce)

ALBUM: Tony MacAlpine's *Equilibrium*. His approach is always exciting and his compositions are inspiring with interesting and challenging harmonies.

SONG: Adele, "Easy on Me." Her work inspires me to play more dynamically, creating voices and different expressions with the instrument.

RIFF: Animals As Leaders' "Monomyth" has the best riff of the year, no question.

GUITAR MOMENT: I organized a fundraiser for Jason Becker, and had almost every guitarist you can name participat-

Matt Heafy (Trivium)

ALBUM: *LTE3* by Liquid

Tension Experiment
SONG: "Alive or Undead" by Powerwolf

RIFF: "Pandora" by Fit for an Autopsy.

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY:

The Passerelle Bridge by Khaki King turns your acoustic guitar into a Japanese koto. I've been trying to learn how to play that for my side project IBARAKI's second record.

Cody Quistad (Wage War)

ALBUM: Beartooth, *Below*

SONG: Morgan Wallen, "865"

RIFF: Limp Bizkit, "Out of Style"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Spiritbox and Mike Stringer
GUITAR MOMENT: Our first show back was on August 14, and I was the most scared I've ever been. It ended up being a very special show.

Seth (Behemoth)

ALBUM: *Torn Arteries*, Carcass

metal hasn't done yet.

GUITAR MOMENT: When I broke both my hands during Covid, I had to have surgery and physical therapy to relearn how to use them; after I got my hands healed and was good enough to play, I wrote a song that was on one of our EPs. It was a huge accomplishment because I went through a lot of stuff physically and mentally.

Joshua Moore (We Came As Romans)

SONG: "Hallelujah"

by Underoath

RIFF: "Hell of It" by Beartooth

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Spiritbox

GEAR: I switched to ESP, and they sent me a TE E-II seven-string. It's just awesome.

Will Deely (Beartooth)

ALBUM: *Sob Rock*, John Mayer

SONG: "Close to You" by

Dayglow

RIFF: "Dad Vibes" by Limp

Bizkit

SOLD: Death Roll, "Wage War"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Spiritbox

Zach Huston (Beartooth)

ALBUM: *Violence Unimagined*

by Cannibal Corpse

RIFF: "Lira" by Bossk

SOLD: "Sickle and Peace"

by Mastodon

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Frozen

Soul

Brady Uttley (Rivers of Nihil)

ALBUM: Alluvial's *Sarcoma* has some of the most ear-perking and tasteful playing you'll find.

SONG: "Dagger" by Mastodon.

It's got some of the coolest instrumentation and arrange-

ment I've heard from them.

RIFF: "Holiday" by Turnstile

SOLD: Alluvial, "Thy Underling"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST:

Turnstile. **GW**

I organized a fundraiser for Jason Becker... We ended up raising over \$500,000. He has been my hero since I was a kid, AND GETTING TO DO THIS FOR HIM WAS AN HONOR"
—DRAGONFORCE'S HERMAN LI

of the best hands in the business. There's not a lot of people doing that on his level.

SONG: "Casanova" by Thornhill

RIFF: Alluvial. The riff that starts at 2:08 from "Sugar Paper" is offensive and just nasty. It has a very Jeff Loomis vibe.

REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO: Going back on the road with Cannibal Corpse. We haven't toured since '19.

Michael Ammott (Arch Enemy)

ALBUM: Hooded Menace's *The Tritonus Bell* is an insanely heavy record from the Finnish doom/death merchants. A lot

ing. We ended up raising over \$500,000 for Jason. He has been my hero since I was a kid, and getting to do this for him was an honor.

Jeremy DePoyster (The Devil Wears Prada)

ALBUM: Wage War, *Manic*

SONG: Beartooth, "The Past Is Dead"

NEW ARTIST/GUITARIST: Dying

Wish. This band goes so hard.

REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO: Touring and new music. Guitar music will never die, and we intend to keep our pedal to that metal in ensuring that.

SONG: Mastodon, "Teardrinker"

RIFF: Gojira, "Hold On"

SOLD: Eric Ruten on "Inhumane

Harvest" by Cannibal Corpse

NEW SKILL, TECHNIQUE OR DISCOVERY:

Chicken pickin'. It allows you to achieve very interesting licks with quite low technical abilities. I was able to smuggle some of them into Behemoth.

Phil Manansala (Of Mice & Men)

ALBUM: *Eternal Blue* by Spiritbox — a really good guitar-lick-heavy album.

SONG/RIFF: "Teardrinker" by Mastodon. They're another one of those bands doing something



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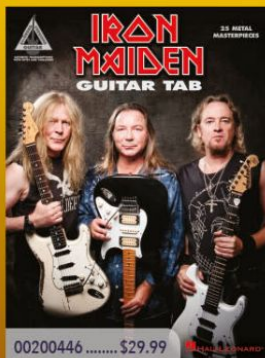
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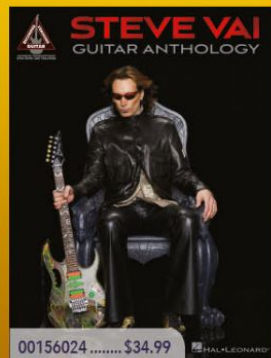
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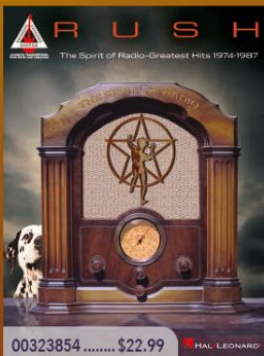
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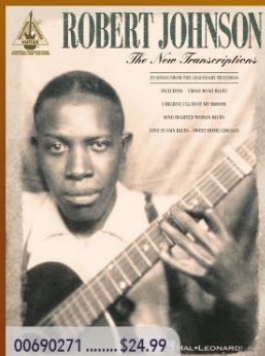
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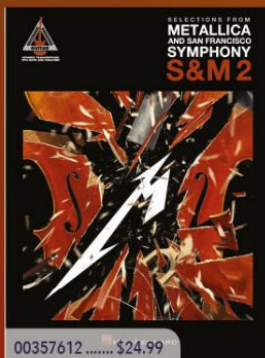
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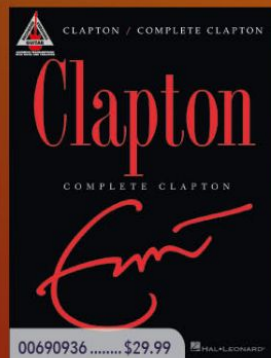
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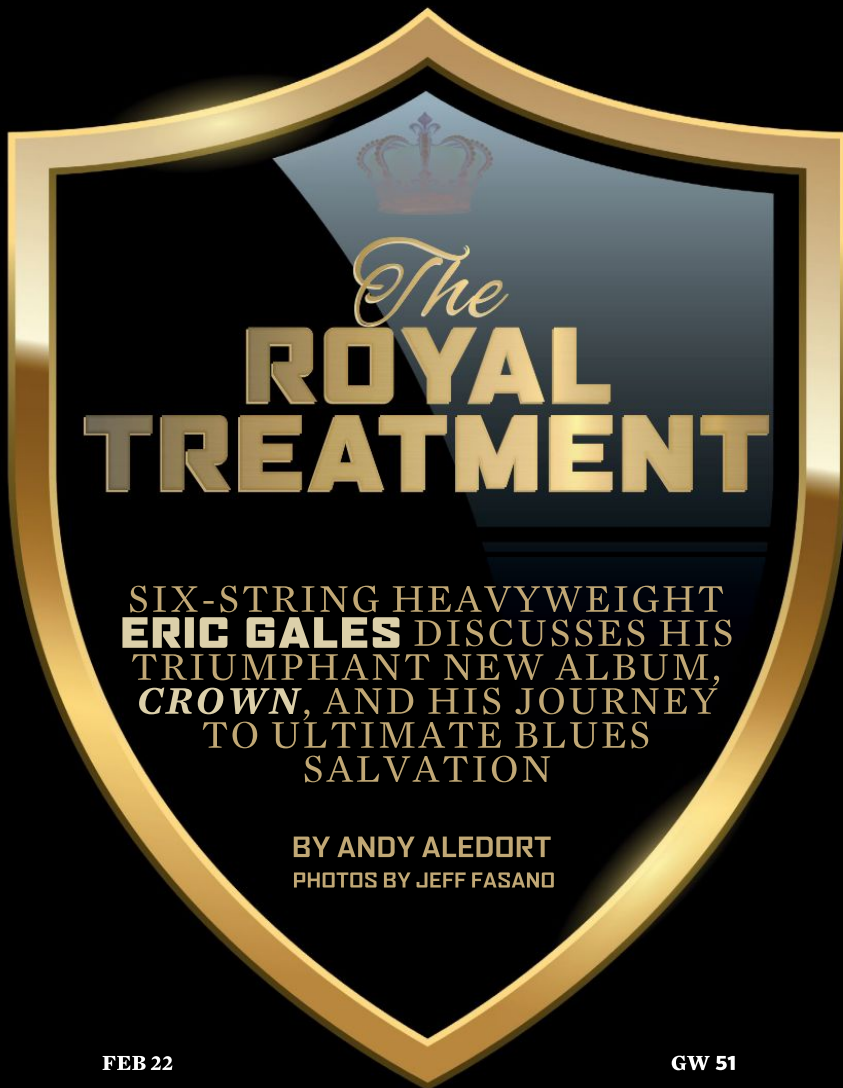
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"You might like me for what I do, but if you don't like me for who I am, then it means nothing," says Eric Gales, whose new album, *Crown*, will be available in January



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Gales photographed in Nashville with his new signature model, the Magneto Guitars RD3



"THE WORLD KNOWS ME, BUT THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW ME."

Eric Gales, heralded as one of the greatest blues and rock guitarists of his generation, has lived a life of soaring heights alongside deep, dark lows. His brilliant, spectacular playing has garnered the respect of generations of guitar fans as well as peers like Eric Johnson, Joe Bonamassa, Dave Navarro, Gary Clark Jr. and Zakk Wylde, as well as his own heroes, such as Carlos Santana who says, "Eric is absolutely incredible."

Since 1991, the Memphis-born Gales has redefined the language of blues guitar with stunning virtuosity and on-the-edge musical daring, combining the influences of Albert King and Jimi Hendrix with an infusion of the harmonically complex sounds of jazz and classical music, all delivered with a combination of emotional intensity and masterful precision. When he was just 16, Gales released his Elektra Records debut, *The Eric Gales Band* [1991], instantly earning high praise as a guitarists' guitarist. Over the course of 30 years and 18 albums, his passion for the guitar and his boundless desire to keep his music vital has never waned. But like so many before him, the track of his career was derailed numerous times due to substance abuse. "I put myself in the backseat through my drug addiction," Gales says candidly. In 2009, he hit bottom and served jail time at Shelby County Correctional Center outside of Memphis for possession of drugs and a weapon.

Now five years sober, a rejuvenated Gales is set to release *Crown* [January 28, via *Provogue/Mascot Label Group*], the strongest album of his career in terms of songwriting, singing and his signature explosive guitar playing. Produced by Joe Bonamassa and Josh Smith, *Crown* showcases Gales sharing his feelings of positivity and dedication as well as his reflections on the fraught state of the world today. The album was recorded in

Nashville at Ocean Way and Sound Emporium studios.

What led up to making this new record with Joe Bonamassa as producer?

Back in 2019, Joe had invited me to join him on a blues cruise, where we did an impromptu jam during his song "The Battle of John Henry." A video of the performance hit social media and within 10 days, it was up to 3 million views! The world took to that very, very well.

You and Joe became friends way back at the start of your careers, yes?

Yes. Our history as friends and musical compatriots goes back over 27 years. At that time, he was playing in a group called Bloodline, with the sons of Robbie Krieger, Miles Davis and Berry Oakley [Waylon, Berry Jr. and Erin, respectively], and I met Joe when they opened up for me.

On the blues cruise, Joe and I did an interview together. Beforehand, I had said to my wife, "Babe, I'm just going to throw this at Joe: Will you produce my next record?" The worst thing that could happen is that he's going to tell me "no" — but he's going to have to say "no" in front of a thousand people! I sort of backed him into a corner, but the truth is I couldn't have gotten him to do something he didn't already want to do. He said to me, "You have no idea how long I've been waiting and watching. You are a badass guitarist; it would be more than an honor for me to help you get your rightfully deserved seat at the table." And we cried when we talked about it. He said, "I am going to do my part to lift you up where you're supposed to be. I think your head is in the right position for the crown to properly fit."

It was a great day. I asked, "What would it cost me to get you to produce my record?" he said, "First of all, I'm not cheap." I said, "OK, name the price." He said, "All I require is two Diet Cokes." I went back to my suite and said, "Babe, let's get two Diet Cokes right fast!" I took them back to him and said, "Deal!" We shook hands and that was it.

Something that comes through on many of the tracks on the new album is autobi-

ographical stuff about your personal struggles as well as the nature of the world today. Songs like "The Storm," "Stand Up," "Survivor," "My Own Best Friend" and "You Don't Know the Blues" represent you revealing different aspects of your life, along with your feelings about the world.

My brother Eugene, who was with me in the original Eric Gales Band, was my mentor. He taught me that the best thing I can do is to write about what I know about. I could make up something, but there's no better material than personal experience.

There's a world out there that's being heavily consumed by addiction, of many types and many forms. I think it is a large enough subject for the world to relate to — if not directly through one's own struggles, then indirectly through the struggles of those around us. Many of us have close family members or best friends that are going through the stuff I am talking about.

Now, there's that stuff. But there is also a heavy cloud that's been hanging over the United States for quite some time in regards to race relations and the politics of race relations. I was overly compelled to touch on things of that nature because the day before we started writing for this record was the day George Floyd died. That event, as we all know, caused a cataclysmic, epic circumstance of events that not only affected Minnesota, it affected the USA. And let's go bigger than that: it affected the *entire world*. To look on CNN and see people across the globe saying, "I've had enough of this," I think George Floyd's death brought attention to other countries that have been dealing with the same issues forever.

To see Canada, France, England, Germany — *everywhere* — I have never in my life known of something to affect the entire world in this way. This was an event that unified the world in saying, "I'm tired of this, and something has got to be done about it." I would say that 40 to 50 percent of the material on this record came from things that have happened to me, but I was too high in my own mind to even realize that I had been confronted with things of that nature. Now is the time to talk about it. These things need to be addressed, and I need to let people know that I have a platform to get a message to people that I think they should hear.



The opening lyrics to the song “The Storm” are, “How can you love what I do but hate who I am?”

There are people watching and listening to my music and my social media posts that may sincerely not be aware of what the current state is in this world because of their skin color. They don’t know what it is to wake up in black skin. Take the guitar away from me, take away that people know what it is that I do... take me as a regular human being, as a black person living in America. If I can’t stand there on the merit of how I present myself in front of you, then I don’t want to get to know you. It’s not cool if you need to like me for what it is that I do, but not for who I am.

I will say to my audience, “I want you to understand something: this road goes *both ways*.” And what I mean is, give me the opportunity to *make you hate me*, instead of you deciding to hate me to begin with. Does that make sense? Don’t dislike me because of my skin color or what I look like; give me a reason for you to not like me.

This is a message that many artists choose not to address because subjects like racism are so incendiary, especially right now. There are artists who avoid politics because they don’t want to lose fans.

I think this is something that needs to be put out there, and I am someone that doesn’t choose to be passive about this aspect of our lives.

Have you found that sobriety has helped you to focus and be aware of your feelings more clearly?

Absolutely. Before, as long as I got some dope, you could call me the “N” word, and I might get furious about it, but at different points in time, I allowed myself to get engulfed in things that demeaned me. But, truthfully, I was immersed in a place where everything demeaned me, because I was demeaning myself. It’s something I struggled with for almost 30 years. So the racial stuff was just another piece of wood in the fire to burn.

But now that the heat has cleared, I am much more present about what is and isn’t cool. You have to go knock next door, because right now, I am firmly standing in my sobriety and I am aware of everything that is coming in front of me, so much so that I can see it even before it’s coming. This comes from the evolution of me getting older as well as my sobriety, amongst several other things that have been perks of me getting my shit together, and it’s all part of the gambit that I am stepping into. I am 100 percent prepared and standing firm to go forward with everything that comes my way. You might like me for what I do, but if you don’t like me for who I am, then it means nothing.

I get riled up about it, but these are things that our forefathers fought dearly for. The

musicians in the Forties, the Fifties and the Sixties went through horrific sacrifices, like not being able to have a meal, or even stay in the same places where they were hired to play. I look at the road that was paved for this black African-American by the black African-Americans that came before me, that went through torture and had to smile in the face of it. If I can, I’d like to change that paradigm going forward for the next generation, and hopefully not have these things happen to them. History is *supposed* to be the best teacher, or else nothing is learned and we will continue to go through the same cycles. I will go to my grave hoping and praying that this cycle does not keep getting repeated.

One of the greatest blessings of being a musician is that you can use music to communicate with an audience in a language that everyone understands, and you can touch people if they’re open to it. There’s no color, no race, no age. Music has the power to touch everyone if they’re willing to listen. What are you thinking about when you first walk out to play, in the moments before you embark on delivering your musical message to the audience?

Truth be told, I don’t think about it beforehand at all. It comes to me the moment I step up to the mic. I believe my role is to transmit this energy that’s coming through me from a higher being, and to do my best for it to be accepted the way I am giving it. There’s no preparation for that. I have no intention to try to force something down someone’s throat; no matter how much I might take a stand on how I feel things are dissatisfactory for minorities, it doesn’t deserve to be pushed down someone’s throat, and I try to be aware of that. By the time I’m done playing, my only goal is for the audience to understand very well what it is I am saying, who it is meant for, and my reasons for saying it in the first place.

The people that come to my shows, they don’t come to hear me talk about that, and I understand that; they come to hear me play. But I have manifested a way to integrate my conversation about my platform without it turning into something overly political. That is a dog-and-pony show in and of itself. I would rather speak from my own experiences and shed some enlightenment if I can.

I met someone after a show the other day that said to me, “I’m so glad that my friend brought me to this show, because it opened my eyes to a whole style of music that I had no idea about.” As great as it is to touch the people who may have never heard me but come with an open mind, I honestly want the people who come with a *closed* mind. If the energy that drives me connects with that person with the closed mind, then their mind will really be blown, because they showed up with their arms crossed in front of them but left with their arms wide open.

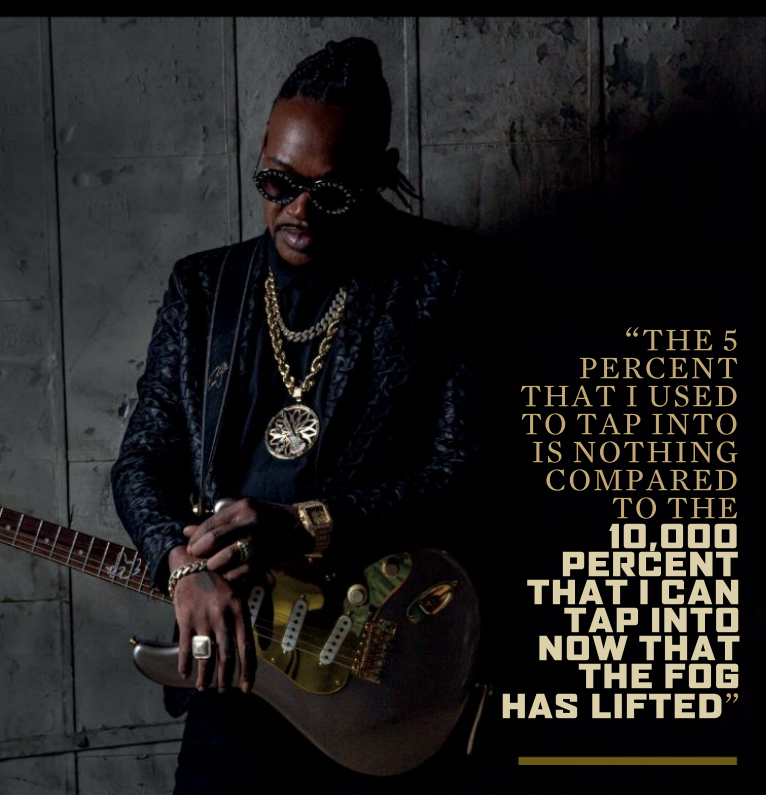
You are saying that music has the power to

change the way people understand and feel about life and about society overall.

Yes, absolutely. I believe there is a synergy that provides me with the gift that I have been blessed with, and there could be people in my audience that are atheists or agnostic that have never experienced what it feels like to be in a black Baptist church, which is the power that happens from music and the emotions it taps into. That is the kind of spiritual power I want to communicate in my show. I was raised in the church, and while there are people in my audience that are feeling the same feeling that I got in church, so am I! I am playing two roles: I am not only playing this show for them, I am also playing this show for *me*, for my own enlightenment and connection to a spiritual feeling. I am feeling the same thing that I am sending out to the audience, just as if I am out there with them. The power is coming through me and I can feel it, too.

When people see me yelling while I’m playing, I’m having a conversation with somebody, and it’s not myself — I’m getting hit with it just like everyone else. And I don’t mean that in any kind of “braggadocio” way; the feeling overwhelms me. I’m just a vessel, and when the feeling comes through, I just get out of the way and let what happens happen. I feel very blessed that I have the opportunity to commu-





“THE 5 PERCENT THAT I USED TO TAP INTO IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE 10,000 PERCENT THAT I CAN TAP INTO NOW THAT THE FOG HAS LIFTED”

nicate these feelings, especially to those in the audience that may have never felt these things before.

The truth is, my addiction almost killed me at least five or six times, and the fact that I am standing here today is a miracle. I take it as a great blessing that I am here today to share my story and strive to pass along a positive message to anyone that will listen. All of the people I have known through my life that died from drug addiction are standing on my shoulders today, helping me try to get through to the one person that may be going through what I went through, or they know someone that is going through it, and I want to show them that there is hope. That's what my whole mission is.

Playing blues is all about expressing your emotions. Has becoming sober changed the way you play and the way you feel about blues? I thought in my high-getting days that I was playing some of the most *dope-est* shit ever. But when I decided to put everything I could into sobriety, I was very afraid as to whether I'd still be able to tap into what I thought was “it,” only to find out that I've been *shutting myself off* for 30-something years! The connection I feel now is as raw and authentic as it could ever be and supersedes by a million

miles anything I could do while I was high. It's incredible the barometer for emotional intertwinement that I feel now, and that's true whether I'm in front of a crowd or just sitting at home playing acoustic guitar. I can go to crying, and I live for that now. I could just look at a guitar and almost start crying! [Laughs] I have *never* been more in touch with myself than I am now. The 5 percent that I used to tap into is nothing compared to the 10,000 percent that I can tap into now that the fog has lifted.

One of the most powerful tracks on the record is “Too Close to the Fire.”

Joe and I had spoken a lot about the things I wanted to address in the songs, and that song is all about letting yourself get burned, or allowing yourself to be in a dangerous place for yourself. Joe had a riff and I had the privilege of having Keb Mo', Tom Hambridge and James House as co-writers, and the majority of the songs on the record came together with everyone's input.

Songs like “Stand Up,” “My Own Best Friend” and “Survivor” have a gospel vibe to them, and that uplifting spiritual feeling is so strong that most listeners cannot help but to be touched by it.

Growing up in the Baptist Church and being immersed in gospel music has made it a heavy part of my genetic makeup. I'm so glad we were able to present that style of music, along with all of the other “roads” we traveled through the entire record.

You've also got heavy in-the-pocket funk tunes, like “Put That Back” and “Let Me Start with This,” combined with a Jimi Hendrix/Stevie Ray Vaughan feeling.

On “Let Me Start with This,” I was playing through a Leslie, which really gives it that “Jimi” vibe. Joe and I were putting the song together and I said, “Let me start with this,” and I started playing, and it was the perfect title. Those are both heavy pocket tunes, and when you combine these with the blues songs and the R&B/soul ballad-type tunes, we tried to cover the whole pie. This is what gratifies me the most about the record: it's not just blues, or just gospel, or just funk; we got everything on there that I love the most.

Tell me about the acoustic track, “I Found Her.”

My intention is for 70- and 80-year-old couples to play that song on their anniversary day. Joe said, “Let's put an accordion on it,” and it gives it that Italian, romantic vibe. The song is about how I feel about my wife, LaDonna.

Of course, there's the title track, “I Want My Crown,” for which you and Joe made a great video of going at each other in a boxing ring. We've been playing that song live and it is *smashing* the audience. The video concept came out of a dream I had, which originally stems from that video of Joe and me on the ship playing “The Ballad of John Henry.” So we just made it a real “battle,” in the ring. And even though we present it as a guitar duel, in our eyes it's a conversation.

LaDonna is singing on “Take Me Just As I Am,” yes?

Yes she is. It was a flip-around in that the whole idea was for me to back her up, after all of these years of her backing me up. She killed it.

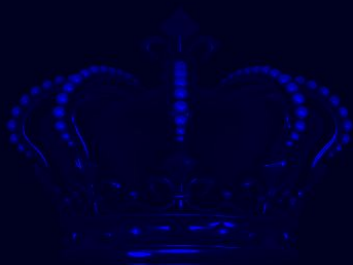
You also have a new Eric Gales signature model guitar from Magneto Guitars, the RD3.

A few years ago, Magneto came out with the RawDawg guitar, but it was in the range of \$4,500. This time, we decided to make it more consumer-friendly without sacrificing any of the quality or the materials, and it'll be around \$1,250. The new one feels exactly the same as the one I've been playing. It's an incredible guitar. The first 20 will be sold exclusively through ericgales.com. I plan to do a bundle package with the album, the guitar, my MXR Raw Dawg pedal and my DV Mark signature amplifier, which is a hybrid tube/transistor and runs at 250 watts. I run two or four at a time and it sounds incredible! **GW**

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"I really like writing with other people in mind, because you can detach all the hangups you might have about yourself." Joe Bonamassa says



KINGPIN *of the* BLUES

GW 57

JOE BONAMASSA

RETURNS WITH *TIME CLOCKS*,
HIS STRONGEST AND MOST
DIVERSE ALBUM TO DATE — AND
ALSO DISCUSSES HIS NEWFOUND
ROLE AS 2021'S FOREMOST
BLUES/ROCK IMPRESARIO

BY ANDY ALEDORT

PHOTOS BY JEFF FASANO

FEB 22



"WHO DOESN'T LOVE A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED GUITAR BATTLE?"

Joe Bonamassa, calling in from "Nerdville," his home in Nashville, is referring to the guitar duel that took place between Eric Gales and himself in August 2019 during his annual Keeping the Blues Alive cruise in the Mediterranean. This epic throwdown between two of today's primary blues/rock virtuosos has garnered well over 3 million views on YouTube; if you haven't seen it, do yourself a favor and check it out. It's a miracle their guitars didn't spontaneously combust into flames.

"That was so much fun," Bonamassa says. "Everyone wanted to see Eric and me go at it in a friendly way. And it has to be just like that: it's not a 'competition'; it's about spurring each other on in a playful, 'Can you top this?' way. It's really fun for us, and I think it's fun for the audience to see each of us trying to 'outdo' one another, raising the bar as we go."

Bonomassa has just released *Time Clocks*, his 15th solo album, on his own J&R Adventures label. Eleven of these albums have reached Number 1 on the *Billboard* blues charts. About the new record, Bonamassa says, "What started out with the intention of being a trio record turned into probably my most adventurous and involved record."

His longtime producer, Kevin "Caveman" Shirley, adds, "I think Joe has made an album that is truly transitional, from a blues musician to a superstar artist. I'm so thrilled to be along for the ride." Bonamassa and Shirley brought the legendary Bob Clearmountain onboard to mix the tracks.

But Bonamassa hasn't confined his energies to writing, recording, touring and melting faces. He's also a co-founder of the Keeping the Blues Alive foundation, which functions as a record label and as a charity for struggling musicians. In June 2020, he worked with Dion on the *Blues and Friends* album, featuring luminaries such as Van Morrison, Jeff Beck, Paul Simon and Bruce Springsteen, while also producing albums for Reese Wynans, Joanne Shaw Taylor,

Joanna Connor, Beth Hart and — with the upcoming release of *Crown* — Eric Gales.

Bonomassa spent some time with us to discuss *Time Clocks* as well as his collaboration with Gales, his very good friend.

Let's begin with your collaboration with Eric Gales on *Crown*, which you co-produced and co-wrote songs for.

It all started with Eric's participation in my Keeping the Blues Alive cruise in August 2019. We'd talked about doing it prior to that, but the stars finally aligned, and here he was. So I said to him, 'Let's have a big jam on "The Ballad of John Henry."' I said to the audience, "I think you'd like to see this gentleman and me playing over some sludgy blues rock shit in the key of E, just shredding the crap out of some guitars!" And I refer to him as one of the finest, if not the finest, guitarist in the world today, which I would use him is.

You and Eric have been friends for almost 30 years, going back to your days in *Bloodline* in the early Nineties.

That's right, and I love him. When we have one of these epic throwdowns, no one gets out without a black eye! He'll play something and I'll think, "Goddam!" so then I have to hit him with something else.

A good guitar battle has to be based on friendship and respect, but the audience also wants to see an epic standoff between guitar slingers.

That's true, but we pull no punches. That kind of battle just makes everyone better. I know going in that Eric has this "fifth gear," so I have to *live* in the fifth gear, too! When Eric plays, it's *on* and there's no half-power switch; he is coming right at you.

How did the material come together for Eric's new record, *Crown*?

The first thing I did was I listened to all of his records — 17 albums — and I'd sing along to find his range. This way, while I was writing songs for the record, I'd write something with his vocal range in mind.

A really great tune from the record is "Too Close to the Fire."

I wrote that one in New York with Tom Hambridge. I said, "We need a 'Hendrix-y

thing,'" and I came up with the riff on a Strat, thinking, "I can see Eric playing this." Lyrically, it came from conversations between Eric, Josh Smith and me.

Eric mentioned that when you first convened to put the record together, the George Floyd event had just taken place and the world was riveted on the repercussions that ultimately reverberated around the globe.

Eric was very emotional about that. I said, "You know, Eric, the difference between you and me is that, if I had had the same problems you've had, I would have been given more of an opportunity to go to a rehabilitation clinic before I was tossed in jail. And he said, "After a while, you get too close to the fire," and I thought, "I'm writing that down, and I'm writing down more things from these conversations."

I had about 35 "Eric Gales-isms" written down, and I would use them in the lyrics. We'd be in the studio and I'd hand him the lyrics to a song, and he'd say, "This is stuff that I would say!" and I said, "That's because it is stuff you said!" Though often those quotes came from any number of different contexts. And that worked out really well, because I don't think he would have ended up writing songs like that by himself.

The lyrics on this song, as well as "The Storm," "Survivor," "Let Me Start with This" and others, worked out really well because the subject matter is not only topical for him, it's topical for the world at large. It's very real.

He played through a Leslie [*speaker cabinet*] for "Let Me Start with This" to ramp up a Hendrix vibe on that one, too. His rig was his DV Mark amp, and one of my high-powered Twins, and the two amps together worked really well.

The challenge we had was that I wanted him to cut "on the floor," to track his solos at the same time as we cut the basic tracks with the band. He didn't want to, so I said, "Can you at least play the solos in the spots while we cut the basics, and we can change them later?" The rhythm section needs something to react to while they are cutting the song, too. We had nine days total, and I didn't want to spend nine days overdubbing guitars.

He had a peer telling him that we were going to work 180 degrees from what he's used to, but I got him to cut some brilliant



solos with the band while I sat there taking notes. I like to cut to a click so it's easy to "comp" between takes [edit different solos together to make one solo]. After recording, he said, "I'm gonna go outside and have a smoke," so I used that opportunity to comp a solo from three different takes. It came out great and he came back in and asked, "How is it?," and I said, "Check this solo out." And he goes, "Dude, that's slamming!" So, by day two, he was cutting everything on the floor with the band. Ultimately, there were very few overdubs on the solos; he got into cutting them live and we got into a great groove.

Let's talk about your new album, *Time Clocks*. When did you start working on this record and how did it come together?

A lot of my records have "themes," and the theme here was that I wanted to make a "New York" record. When I record in Nashville, I snap my fingers and a cartage truck brings every possible guitar/amp combo to the studio. But we were at Germano's [the old Hit Factory] in New York, and I was forced to use just a few pieces of gear and a couple of guitars, and it changed the entire vibe and recording process. This was like, "I want a screwdriver, a hammer," and that equated to a reissue Nocaster, a 1968 Telecaster with a Parsons/White B-bender, a 1954 Strat, a 1959 sunburst Les Paul, a 1961 dot-neck ES-335, a 1965 Rickenbacker 360 12-string, a Martin acoustic and one brown Deluxe and one blackface Deluxe Reverb.

I had been booked to play Love Rocks New York [an annual charity concert at the Beacon Theater] so I had a high-powered Twin flown in for that, and it ended up on the record in a few spots, too. The freedom of no gear encouraged the feeling of more creativity.

You use the B-bender on the title track.

It's been a really great tool. I was playing through both Deluxes along with a Schaffer wireless replica, like the one Angus Young uses, as a boost. I'm surprised the Deluxes survived because I was running them hard.

Were all the songs written specifically for this record?

Two songs were left over from the *Royal Tea* excursion last year, which are "The Royal Kind," which I wrote with Bernie Marsden, and "Time Clocks," which I'd forgotten about. The entire song was in my voice memos as "TC demo," so I just copied the lyrics from what I thought I said. A free one! All of the other songs were written in my apartment in NYC before the sessions with my friend James House from Nashville. Everything was cut "three-piece" — guitar/bass/drums — in New York, and then Kevin added singers, keyboards, didgeridoo, etc., in Sydney, Australia. Jeff Bova, who we've been working with for 15 years, added all of the



Bonomassa
photographed in Nashville
with a Gibson Firebird

"THE FREEDOM
OF [HAVING]
NO GEAR
ENCOURAGED
THE FEELING
OF MORE
CREATIVITY"



"WE PULL NO PUNCHES... I KNOW GOING IN THAT ERIC [GALES] HAS THIS 'FIFTH GEAR,' SO I HAVE TO LIVE IN THE FIFTH GEAR TOO!"

strings. It was a strange way to make a record but it worked out well.

Tell me about the two opening tracks, "Pilgrimage" and "Notches."

Kevin wanted me to open the record with an instrumental, and he had heard "Notches," which I'd written with Charlie Starr [*Blackberry Smoke*]. Jeff Bova, with Kevin's direction, created an instrumental track and I soloed over it. "Notches" started with this lick I wrote, influenced by Ali Farka Touré and Moroccan music. Charlie had the opening lines of the chorus, "I've got miles under my wheels and notches in my walking cane." The song wrote itself in about 15 minutes around the lick and the vibe of that chorus.

"Curtain Call" has a bit of that Led Zeppelin/ "Kashmir" vibe.

At this point, that's almost perfunctory on any record I do with Kevin Shirley. It's obligatory: "Have we ripped off 'Kashmir' or 'When the Levee Breaks' yet?" [Laughs]

It's clear you are as interested in elements of pop and creative musical twists as you are with getting a great guitar sound and laying down great guitar parts. The "blues" part of your musical personality is well represented on *Time Clocks*, but so are these other influences. I wrote "Curtain Call" with James House, and songwriting is the last frontier for me. You can do your best to recreate your favorite sounds, and recreate a vibe, but far more important is pushing yourself to write better

songs. The more you push on the front part of the record, the more joyous it is to record the actual record itself. You know the songs are strong; you aren't thinking, "Well, let's just put more reverb on it — maybe that will help!" "Let's flange the chorus!" You can try to mask the problems in the writing with studio tricks, but that does not work. Also, the better the song, the more fun it is to play live and the better everything is.

Can you look at this record objectively and observe that your songwriting and playing has changed?

I would say that becoming friends with the writers in Nashville and learning how they put stuff together has helped a lot. Overall in the last year and a half, I've written more songs than I have in my entire life because I had three records to deal with, starting with Eric's record, and then we did a Jimmy Hall record that will come out next year, and also there was my record. Having the opportunity to write for other people gave me a better grasp of writing for my own records. I found that I really like writing with other people in mind, because you can detach all the hangups you might have about yourself, like, "I don't know if I can sing this and hit those notes." But Jimmy Hall can!

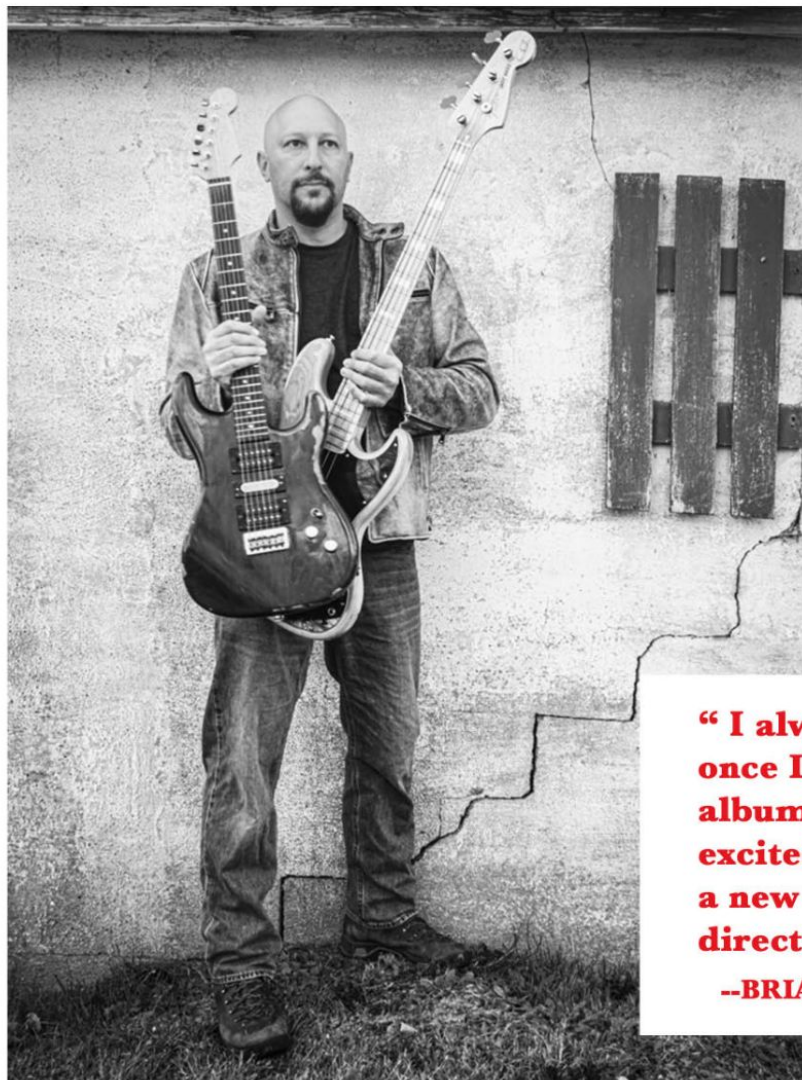
An endeavor of yours that deserves attention of its own is your Keeping the Blues Alive Foundation, which functions as a record label and a charity. Can you describe KTBA?

Keeping the Blues Alive is something we put

together in June 2020 to release albums I produce or co-produce, but it's also a fundraising organization to help musicians. One of the coolest things to come out of that jam I did on the cruise with Eric was that the guitar I used was custom-built for me by Gibson. It is a replica of one of my 1960 Les Pauls and it features my name inlaid in the fingerboard.

I thought it would be cool to auction off the guitar, combined with one of my reissue high-powered Fender Twins, as a way to raise funds for the charity. Up until last year, we'd raised about \$600,000-700,000 that went toward music programs in schools. Once Covid hit, I thought we should expand the charity to help the many, many musicians — and other people connected to the live music industry — who were forced to lose their gigs and just sit at home with bills to pay and no income. So we started an offshoot called "Fueling Musicians," offering monetary assistance to musicians and crew people, and it's been a huge success. Everyone from Guitar Center to Chicago Music Exchange, Ernie Ball, Gibson, they all kicked in some money, and we did some stream-a-thons and ended up raising another \$580,000.

I decided to put the guitar up for auction as part of the charity, along with the reissue Twin with the serial #1 — the first one! In no time I had a guy who offered to buy both for \$50,000. His email said, "This is a great cause, and it's the guitar Joe played with Eric Gales!" That one auction moved the needle in a very significant way, and the money went on to help a great deal of musicians. **GW**



**“ I always feel,
once I finish a new
album, that I am
excited to explore
a new musical
direction”**

--BRIAN KASTAN

Rolling the Dice on Life

MEET GUITAR AND BASS MUSICIAN BRIAN KASTAN: A RECORDING MACHINE PUSHING TOWARDS 40 ORIGINAL RECORDINGS TO DATE.

Brian Kastan is a guitarist, electric and fretless bass player, composer, improviser and sound engineer who has released 36 self-produced solo albums. The last 20 albums were improvised

since the beginning of COVID, 2020. Every album creates its own musical direction with vibes ranging from hard-hitting avant-funk to odd metered funky bass lines.

His newest album, “Soul Reveal” is now available on Band Camp, YouTube and Spotify. Look for more music and live recordings at his website: www.BrianKastan.com.

2021

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS

Like the headline says, here's a solid sampling of new gear that struck our fancy over the past 12 months

BY AMIT SHARMA, PAUL RIARIO AND DAMIAN FANELLI

THE WORLD MIGHT still be in a state of recovery, but it's been a spectacular year for gear, with all kinds of enticing offerings and world-class designs getting launched across the past 12 months. If anything, the guitar trade has been remarkably buoyant — maintaining momentum even when the

biggest events and exhibitions were unable to take place. There were some big surprises, like recording hardware and software specialists Universal Audio moving into the effect pedal market, Gene Simmons teaming up with Gibson for his own G² guitars and basses, Boss launching their very first six-string, as well as a whole host of truly innovative ideas coming from companies old and new. So, without further ado, here's our roundup of some of the best guitar gear released in 2021.

GIBSON

JERRY CANTRELL "WINO" LES PAUL CUSTOM

\$8,999, [gibson.com](https://www.gibson.com)

They've signed a few big names over the last couple of years, but teaming up with Jerry Cantrell was an especially wise move for Gibson. The Seattle riff lord has always used Les Pauls alongside his G&L guitars — one of which being the Wine Red Les Paul Custom that inspired his first "Wino" signature. Limited to only 100 and each hand-signed by Cantrell, the guitars feature Gibson's 490R and 498T pickups, as well as a Fishman Powerbridge piezo pickup-equipped bridge to cover the acoustic tones Alice in Chains have long utilized. With a Murphy Lab aged finish, it's an instrument that looks as good as it sounds. "The Wino has a bit more of a rounder tone than the other three Les Pauls I own... it's a fuller, richer and warmer sound," Cantrell explained in August.





UNIVERSAL AUDIO

UAFX PEDALS

\$399 (each), uaudio.com

Universal Audio is a company known for many things, though until this year, that didn't include effect pedals. The three pedals launched as part of the all-new UAFX line at the beginning of 2021 made some headlines, and rightly so — living up to the pro-audio legacy behind them with feature-rich, cutting-edge designs and world-class tones. The Golden Reverberator offers some truly mouth-watering vintage spring, plate and digital reverbs, whereas the Astra Modulation Machine can flick between bucket-brigade chorus, Seventies flanger and tube tremolo settings, with secondary modes for vibrato, doubling and more. The Starlight Echo System packs in three delay types with additional settings for tape wear, modulation and preamp color.

JACKSON

MISHA MANSOOR SO-CAL 2PT

\$2,799, jacksonguitars.com

Classic Strat-style guitars aren't something Misha Mansoor — or Periphery in general — are known for, and it'd be fair to say the same goes for the majority of tech-metal bands out there, which is exactly why this latest signature model caught everyone off-guard. Don't be fooled by the dazzling Daphne Blue finish; it's an instrument capable of some serious heavy metal thunder, thanks to the ceramic Bare Knuckle Ragnarok humbucker in the bridge, complemented by Bare Knuckle Trilogy Suite single-coils in the neck and middle. Its 20-inch radius baked maple fretboard is also incredibly playable — performing more like his Jackson Juggernaut signatures than the vintage Strat family that so clearly inspired its aesthetics.



BOSS

SY-200 GUITAR SYNTHESIZER PEDAL

\$299, boss.info

Given the unanimously rave reviews about the SY-1 synth pedal launched in 2019, Boss read the market well by choosing to expand it into the larger 200 Series. The new model comes with 12 analog-style synth categories and an abundance of variations totaling 171 sounds, with 128 memories for saving your favorite tones. Then there's the parallel send/return loop for seamless integration into any board, and extended controls and connectivity via expression pedals, external footswitches, MIDI and USB for firmware updates. If you've been wanting to dive deep into the world of arpeggiators and sequencers or pads and strings without bothering with a special pickup on your guitar, this should be at the top of the list.

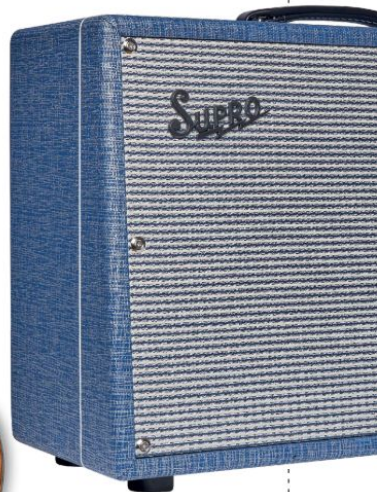


ESP

LTD TE-1000 EVERTUNE KOA

\$1,399, espguitars.com

Much like Misha Mansoor's new signature, this new LTD Deluxe six-string looks a lot more well-behaved than it actually is on closer inspection. There's an EMG 66TW humbucker in the neck position, which is splittable by a push-pull control, and a 57 in the bridge — offering more versatility and less compression than other active EMGs, but still plenty of firepower nevertheless. The Evertune constant-tension bridge improves tuning stability and intonation, while the set-thru 25.5-inch scale three-piece maple neck and Macassar ebony fingerboard make it as playable as it is punchy. We can only conclude that its natural-finish T-style body, made out of mahogany and topped with Hawaiian koa, is a work of masterful deception.



Supro have gone from strength to strength since their 2014 relaunch, signing up players like Lenny Kravitz, Joe Walsh and Richard Fortus

NEURAL DSP

ARCHETYPE: GOJIRA

\$159, neuraldsp.com

What happens when the band who wrote “The Heaviest Matter of the Universe” collaborate with Neural DSP? You get the heaviest plug-in in the universe. And the Gojira Archetype is exactly that — bringing Gojira singer/guitarist’s earth-rumbling tones to the masses, digitally and affordably. It comes with three amps (Clean, Rust and Hot) and effects like overdrive, distortion, delay, reverb, phaser and chorus — as well as a cab sim with hundreds of IRs designed by Adam “Nolly” Getgood [*ex-Periphery*]. To prove his point, Duplantier retracked Gojira single “Silvera” using the new plug-in, with some truly stunning results. “It’s very difficult to capture the oomph, brightness and body of a real amp,” he told us at the time. “With this plug-in, you get it right off the bat. Producers can work for weeks to get a great tone, but you get it as default, which is why I think it’s mind-blowing.”

SUPRO

KEELEY CUSTOM 12

\$1,199, suprousa.com

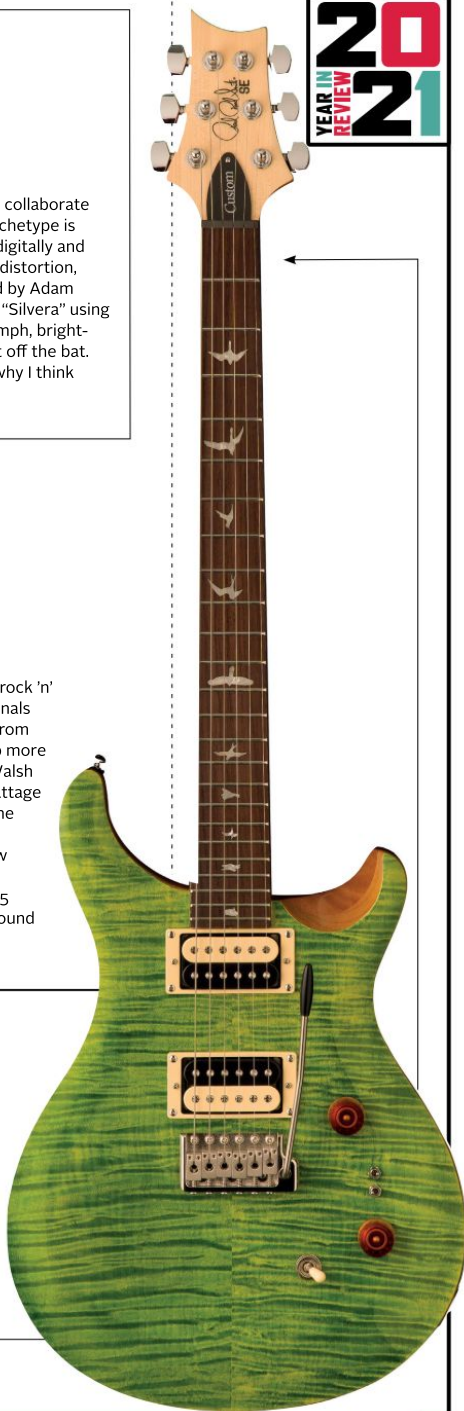
Though they’re a company deeply rooted in vintage rock ‘n’ roll — their amps having been made famous by originals like Jimmy Page and Keith Richards — Supro have gone from strength to strength since their 2014 relaunch, signing up more top-notch players like Lenny Kravitz, Billy Gibbons, Joe Walsh and Richard Fortus. Specializing predominantly in low-wattage tube combos, often with no effects loops, the arrival of the Keeley Custom 10 in 2018 won praise far and wide for its pedal-friendly design and send/return versatility. The new Keeley Custom 12 — again co-designed with effects guru Robert Keeley himself, this time with a Celestion G12M-65 Creamback replacing the custom 10-inch CR10 speaker found in the original — looks like it will be another best-seller.

PRS GUITARS

SE CUSTOM 24-08

\$929, prsguitars.com

Every year it feels like PRS finds new ways to bridge the gap between their affordable SE line and the Core series models they take inspiration from. And still, even factoring their reputation for greatness, we were quite frankly stunned by the new SE Custom 24-08 — which merges features from their Custom 24 flagship and the now-discontinued 408. Like the Core 24-08, the new model boasts two mini-toggle coil-tap switches that individually split the TCI “S” humbuckers into true single coils for a total of eight pickup configurations. Other features include a maple top/mahogany body, a 25-inch scale maple neck, a rosewood fingerboard, bird inlays and a PRS molded tremolo. Truth be told, this could be one of the finest guitars PRS has ever made for under \$1,000.



20
YEAR IN
REVIEW
21



FENDER

CORY WONG STRATOCASTER

\$1,999, fender.com

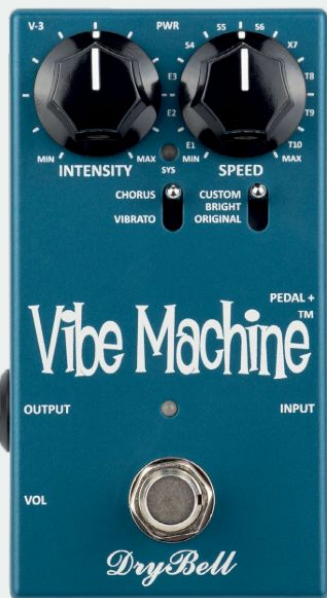
▲ Standing now as the poster boy for modern funk, Cory Wong's first artist model was certainly well-timed by Fender. Loosely based on the Sapphire Blue Highway One Strat he famously picked up on Craigslist for \$300, the new signature also features a push/pull switch that will bypass the pickup selector and default to position 4 — a well-known favorite of Wong's. "I have quite a wide sweep with my picking hand, so I end up hitting the selector and surprising myself," he told us back in July, describing the new feature as his "fourth position panic button." Interestingly, the guitars also come with a Cory Wong hair tie for muting the tremolo springs for a response that's "more like a hardtail" during rhythm parts. And, of course, it wouldn't be a signature model without Wong's Seymour Duncan Clean Machine single-coils for dazzling "quack and chime."

DRYBELL

VIBE MACHINE V-3

\$319, drybell.com

▼ What do Steve Stevens, Joe Satriani, Joanne Shaw Taylor and Joe Perry have in common? They've all used the Vibe Machine — made by Croatian boutique pedal specialists Drybell and widely considered to be one of the finest vibes, if not *the* finest vibe, available today. This latest version, announced back in October as part of the company's 10-year anniversary, boasts a wider modulation and more depth than its predecessors while keeping the controls that got it recognized in the first place. There are vibrato and chorus modes, controls for Original, Bright and Custom voicings, plus six "set and forget" side-trimmers for some serious tonal sculpting. Whether you're a fan of Hendrix and Trower or modern progressive rock bands like Mastodon and Baroness, this will definitely get you vibing.



There was a
run of Epiphone
Traditional Pro
ES-335's sold
exclusively
through Guitar
Center over
the summer





EPIPHONE

TRADITIONAL PRO ES-335

\$549 (each), epiphone.com

Not to be confused with the standard ES-335 found in Epiphone's Inspired By Gibson range, there was a run of Traditional Pro guitars available exclusively through Guitar Center over the summer — with some still on sale at the time of this writing. While both variations feature maple bodies, mahogany necks and Alnico Classic Pro humbuckers, the Traditional Pro offers conventional and less-traditional color schemes, including options for Inverness Green and Metallic Gold, and also offers split-coil modes for single-coil sounds. Not bad at all, considering they retail for \$50 less.



IK MULTIMEDIA

AMPLITUBE X-GEAR PEDALS

\$299 (each), ikmultimedia.com

Already giants in the tone-modeling world, thanks to the success of AmpliTube, this year saw IK Multimedia move into the effects hardware market with their X-Gear pedal range. The delay, drive, modulation and reverb units come with AmpliTube 5 SE and can be tweaked via a virtual computer version, with 300 presets for saving your favorite tones. The pedals also can be used as a USB audio interface with a stereo out for monitoring and full MIDI implementation. Given IK Multimedia's track record for creating a real analog experience for digital users, it's interesting to see them working the other way and bringing that ingenuity to the pedalboard.



FU-TONE

FU PRO GUITARS

\$1,199 (each), fu-tone.com

FU-Tone has made quite a name for themselves among professional players as the online depot for high-performance and upgraded guitar parts — especially for locking tremolos — to kickstart your guitar into high gear and transform it from ordinary to extraordinary. But rather than upgrading piecemeal, FU-Tone takes it a step further by introducing their own production guitar line with practically “everything on it.” Available in an enticing array of custom finishes, the FU-Tone FU Pro guitars are superstrats spec'd for speed and big tone and come fully loaded with an FU-Tone FU2 Tremolo with brass big block, titanium saddle inserts, EVH D-Tuna, heavy-duty noiseless springs, brass claw and claw screws and a brass tremolo stopper, FU-Tone Custom humbucker pickups (with individual coil tap switches) and a kill switch. Considering all the built-in premium upgrades and superb build quality at this price point, we believe the FU Pro guitars will be hard to beat.



ERNIE BALL MUSIC MAN

MAJESTY 8-STRING

\$4,199, music-man.com

▲ John Petrucci's Majesty line of guitars are sleek dream machines dialed in for technical playing. They're also — not surprisingly — one of the most successful signature series for Ernie Ball Music Man. Earlier this year, Petrucci had teased in a *GW* interview that he had a new guitar in the works, but no one expected it to be an eight-string! The Majesty 8 features a mahogany neck-through-body with basswood wings and an all-new multi-scale ebony fretboard. As is customary, the Majesty 8 comes with Petrucci's requisite electronics package that includes custom-angled DiMarzio Dreamcatcher and Rainmaker pickups, as well as piezo capabilities. Whether you realize it or not, the Majesty 8 is limited to 100 pieces worldwide and is so popular, it's currently on backorder. Be prepared to toss your hat in the ring if you want some eight-string royalty.



TAYLOR

AD22E AMERICAN DREAM

\$1,599, taylorguitars.com

▲ We were already smitten with Taylor Guitars' American Dream series as the company's most affordable USA-built all-solid wood acoustics in a dreadnought-size; but now players who prefer a smaller-body guitar genuinely have something to look forward to with the latest addition to the line — the AD22e. Swapping the fuller Grand Pacific body style for the compact Grand Concert frame makes the AD22e an inviting acoustic to cradle when playing for extended periods of time. Combining a mahogany top paired with sapele back and sides in an ultra-thin matte finish, the guitar sounds richly bold with a powerful midrange voice, but we also can't ignore the wonderfully slinkier feel, courtesy of its short and sweet 24 7/8"-scale length. Throw in Taylor's V-Class bracing for enhanced power, pitch-perfect intonation and sustain, and we can't help but repeatedly say the AD22e really is a dream to play.



MARTIN

GRAND J-16E 12-STRING

\$2,099, martinguitar.com

▲ If you check out Martin Guitar's current selection of 12-string instruments, you'll find that all three of them come in Martin's well-known Dreadnought body-style, save for the brand-new and exciting Martin Grand J-16E 12-string. What's that? A jumbo 12-string from Martin? It's true. And while jumbo 12-string guitars can feel unwieldy, Martin's Grand J body style is a full-size jumbo with a body thickness reduced to Martin's ooo-depth for added comfort, making it super easy to play. Even with its relaxed dimensions, the Grand J-16E doesn't compromise any of its rich tone or resonant volume provided by a Sitka spruce top with East Indian rosewood back and sides. And even better, we find its high-performance neck taper as one of the finest neck curves for effortless playability on a 12-string.

The guitar-gear trade has
been remarkably buoyant –
maintaining momentum even
when the biggest live shows and
events were sidelined



FENDER

ACOUSTASONIC PLAYER TELECASTER

\$1,199, fender.com

▲ We've been fans of Fender's Acoustasonic series since the American Acoustasonic Telecaster was issued in 2019 (and snagged a Platinum award in our Holiday 2019 issue). Late this year, however, Fender introduced that model's more accessible Mexican cousin, the Acoustasonic Player Tele, which is made in the company's Ensenada factory. The streamlined Player comes with 3-way Voice Selector switch, a Blend knob and a Modern N4 pickup, and — like every other Acoustasonic model — it lets you flip seamlessly between electric and acoustic voicings. It even comes in some undeniably cool new finishes, including Butterscotch Blonde, Shadow Burst and Arctic White — not to mention Brushed Black.



GIBSON

GENERATION G-200

\$1,999, gibson.com

▲ The Generation G-200 jumbo cutaway, one of the stars of Gibson's new Bozeman, Montana-manufactured Generation Collection, is based on a classic J-200 but with a shallower 4-inch body and slightly smaller lower bout. But besides that (and its attractive 25.5-inch scale length), the Generation G-200 benefits from two striking features. First, there's the Gibson Player Port, a bonus soundhole that projects sound upwards toward the player's ear — without taking anything away from the "regular" soundhole! Then there's the extremely nice LR Baggs Element Bronze under-saddle pickup and preamp, which — in the words of our Chris Gill [January 2022] — produces some outstanding natural acoustic tone.



EVENTIDE

TRICERACHORUS

\$299, eventide.com

▲ We love chorus — and the Tricerachorus might just be the Triceratops! [Please pardon the dinosaur pun.] This super-versatile pedal is a bucket brigade-style chorus with full stereo operation, presets and an impressive batch of features. The pedal even applies Eventide's clever MicroPitch detuning technology, deploying a trio of independent chorus voices — left, center and right — each of which can be manipulated and deepened via MicroPitch. The voices also can be combined for an epic wash of chorus that might even be "too Eighties" for the Eighties. There are three types of chorus on offer — Chorus, Vibrato and Chorus — each selectable via the Mix knob. The controls pull double shifts, with their secondary functions in darker text under each knob.

INTRODUCING

Virtuo



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with 22 Fret Access

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SOUND CHECK



the gear
in review



73
EASTMAN
Romeo LA

74
FENDER
Dual Marine Layer
Reverb and Dual
Pugilist Distortion

75
POSITIVE GRID
Experience
Jimi Hendrix for Spark

The Ultimate Experience

PRS HDRX 50

By Chris Gill

FOR A CONSIDERABLE majority of electric guitarists, one of their top three holy grail/bucket list amps is a Marshall JMP 100- or 50-watt plexi head from the late Sixties. Some of the most beloved performances of all time by players that include Jimi Hendrix and Eddie Van Halen were recorded using Super Lead amps from this era. These days Marshall JMP Model 1959 100-watt Super Lead heads in original, unmodified condition can cost nearly \$10,000 (or more, if you can even find one), while the 50-watt JMP Model 1987 cost only a little less.

Fortunately, PRS recently introduced its new HDRX series amps, which are based upon one of Jimi Hendrix's personal amps that he allegedly played at Woodstock. Hendrix's amp features a special "touring



circuit" modification that is replicated here, and new features like a high-mid gain boost make the HDRX amps much more than a knockoff or replica. While the PRS HDRX amps deliver the beloved classic tones that guitarists know very well, it is more versatile and high-performance than its original inspiration, which should make them bucket list amps in their own right.

FEATURES We looked at the 50-watt HDRX 50 head, which shares the same features as its 100-watt counterpart but delivers lower (i.e. more manageable) output power. Like a classic late-Sixties amp, the control panel is very straightforward, providing Presence, Bass, Middle, Treble, Treble Volume and Bass Volume controls (no master volume) and high-mid gain boost and three-way bright (off, bright 1,



CHEAT SHEET



STREET PRICE:

\$2,900 (HDRX 50 head);
\$899 (HDRX 2x12 cabinet)

MANUFACTURER:

PRS Guitars, prsguitars.com

bright 2) switches. There is just a single 1/4-inch input jack, but the treble and bass channels are internally linked so both channels can be combined without using a jumper cable. The rear panel is similarly simple, featuring just five speaker output jacks (pairs of 4- and 8-ohm jacks plus a single 16-ohm output) and a bias adjustment section (note that just like a classic amp, there is no effects loop). Here you'll also find the "Authentic Hendrix" stamp of approval as designers Paul Reed Smith and Doug Sewell were given the Hendrix estate's full blessing to thoroughly examine one of Jimi's amps in 2018 and use it as the foundation for the HDRX design.

The HDRX 50 is powered by a pair of New Sensor EL34EH power amp tubes and three JJ ECC803S preamp tubes. High quality components are used throughout, including custom-made British-style Straight Edge transformers. The HDRX 50 even mimics 100-watt power supply circuitry while still using its own custom 50-watt transformer, making it much closer in output and tonal character to a full 100-watt head. PRS also offers 2x12 and 4x12 cabinets with modified Celestion G12H-75 Creamback speakers designed to enhance and complement the HDRX's signature characteristics and performance.

PERFORMANCE I played the HDRX 50 through various 16-ohm 4x12 cabinets and an 8-ohm HDRX 2x12. The head sounded great through each cabinet, but the 2x12 had an edge over the others thanks to its sweeter overdrive warmth and smoother treble

peaks. Unlike an aged vintage Marshall, the HDRX 50 delivers a fierce, nearly instantaneous attack that reminds me of an aggressive Hiwatt. However, the midrange body is much fuller and voluptuous and the bass is impressively massive when dialed at six or above.

On its own, the Treble channel can be quite bright, but fortunately the tone never becomes overly harsh or too piercing. Instead, strings shimmer like they were made of glass, with the lowest strings packing an impressive chest-thumping punch. The Bass channel is darker and warmer, yet it delivers outstanding clarity and definition. Combining the two delivers a vast rainbow of tones and textures. Tweaking the balance between the two is like blending two incredibly great amps and deciding which one to emphasize or balance. Whereas many classic Marshalls sound great with a Strat and just good with a Les Paul or vice versa, the HDRX 50 can be tweaked to perfectly complement any guitar plugged into it, from a twangy Tele to a high-output super Strat or hollowbody jazz box.

The HDRX 50 is outrageously loud and, like any good non-master volume amp, needs to be cranked up to sound its best. Surprisingly, it's virtually noise-free, which makes it an excellent tool for the studio as well as pristine-sounding live performances. The amp can go from raunchy distortion to pristine clean instantly by adjusting playing dynamics or backing down the volume control, delivering dazzling responsive performances.

- The three-way bright switch provides a standard bright setting (middle) and a custom bright based on the touring circuit found in Jimi Hendrix's amp.
- A high-mid boost switch emphasizes very desirable midrange frequencies that are ideal for fat, singing guitar solos.
- The Treble and Bass channels are internally linked so users can blend and balance each channel just by adjusting the volume controls.
- The amp features no effects loop, but thanks to its voicing and low-noise circuit it delivers excellent performance with pedals.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:** The HDRX 50 truly delivers some of the most desirable amplifier tones while offering guitarists an even wider tonal palette than the original classic model that it is based upon. Player Port to satisfy a wide variety of players.

Romance Play

EASTMAN ROMEO LA

By Chris Gill

IF YOU'RE IN the market for a thinline semi-hollow electric, there's never been a better time to shop than the present. Whereas only a few years ago the selection was pretty much limited to large, double-cutaway 335-style models with a pair of humbucking pickups, today one can find semi-hollow guitars in a variety of body sizes and styles with a wider variety of pickup and electronic configurations.

The Eastman Romeo LA is one of the coolest concepts for a semi-hollow model that I've ever seen. Its asymmetrical compact body design makes a bold first impression thanks to its smaller, sharper treble horn with a deeper cutaway, but closer examination reveals several other distinctive details, including Seymour Duncan Phat Cat pickups and Göldo hardware. The end result is a guitar with a ton of personality and class that sounds and plays as cool as it looks.

FEATURES The tonewood materials used for the construction of the Eastman Romeo LA are all top notch, consisting of an arched spruce laminate top, mahogany laminate back and sides, maple neck and ebony fretboard. The body and neck have a dazzling metallflake Celestine Blue (slightly lighter than Pelham Blue) gloss finish, and the body is decorated with five-ply (top) and two-ply (back) ivoroid binding. Neck specs include a 24.75-inch scale length, 1.72-inch bone nut, 22 medium wide Jescar 47104 frets (the good stuff), 12-inch radius and a medium shallow C-shape profile. The body measures 1.75 inches deep and 14.75 inches across the lower bout, which is about 1/2 inch wider than an ES-339 and 1 1/4 inch slimmer than an ES-335.

The pickups are a pair of gold-foil radiator-face Seymour Duncan Phat Cat P-90s, which are the size of regular humbuckers. Most of the hardware is nickel plated and made by Göldo (the same hardware found on Dusenberg guitars),

including the Bigsby-style LT2 vibrato tailpiece, HWG2N three-point "vario" bridge, three-way pickup selector switch and locking tuners. Other high-quality details include gold "tophat" control knobs, Sky capacitors, CTS audio taper pots, a Switchcraft output jack, Gavitt braided wire and D'Addario NYXL .011-.049 strings.

PERFORMANCE For nearly two decades, Eastman has earned a reputation as a builder of fine archtop guitars, and that know-how truly shows in the Romeo LA's construction. The construction's fit and finish is flawless, and every detail from the fretwork to the smooth, rounded edges of the fretboard are refined to provide the utmost playability and comfort. The design and aesthetics are drop dead gorgeous as well.

What knocked me out was the Romeo LA's distinctive yet versatile tonal character. The radiator Duncan Phat Cats are the coolest P-90-style pickups I've encountered, with that "just right" balance between single-coil bite and definition and humbucker bark and power. The Romeo excelled at any style of music I tried, from rockabilly twang and howlin' blues to raunchy hard rock and fist-pumping metal. The semi-hollow construction provides extra midrange punch and body, but the small f-holes help prevent unwanted feedback and howl.

I examine four to five guitars every month, but because I personally own well in excess of 100 instruments I rarely come across a guitar that offers something that guitars I already own don't offer. The Eastman Romeo LA is the first guitar I've come across in a long time that scores a perfect 10 across the board, from looks and style to playability and comfort to sound. A good semi-hollow thinline offers players exceptional versatility, but a great semi-hollow model like the Eastman Romeo LA is an ideal instrument that offers a lifetime of playing satisfaction.



CHEAT SHEET



STREET PRICE:
\$1,990
MANUFACTURER:
Eastman,
eastmanguitars.com

• The radiator gold foil front Seymour Duncan Phat Cat P-90 pickups deliver that just-right balance between single-coil sparkle and humbucking punch.

• The nickel-plated Göldo hardware includes a Bigsby-style LT2 vibrato tailpiece and locking tuners that keep tuning stable.

• **THE BOTTOM LINE**
The Eastman Romeo LA's compact thinline semi-hollow design and upscale pickups and hardware deliver extremely satisfying performance when it comes to playability and versatility.



Twice As Nice

FENDER DUAL MARINE LAYER REVERB AND DUEL PUGILIST DISTORTION

By Paul Riario

▶ ONCE YOU DISCOVER the bevy of stompboxes Fender has brought to the effects party since 2018, you may wonder, where was my invitation? Well, I say it's never too late to get in on the action, because two of them — the Marine Layer Reverb and the Pugilist Distortion — seem to have noticeably struck a chord among many players in the know.

But now Fender has decided to take a “more the merrier” approach to this shindig by releasing the Dual Marine Layer Reverb and Dual Pugilist Distortion. Both duplicate the original pedals’ control sets (combined with unique options and special features) for two independent settings or voicings that you can footswitch between in a single dual-format stompbox, proving it’s much better to double your pleasure.

FEATURES Both stompboxes come in a lightweight anodized aluminum housing with Fender’s standout fitting of LED-backlit knobs that illuminate brightly. Like the original, the Dual Marine Layer Reverb offers the same Hall, Room and Shimmer reverbs selected via a three-position “Type” mini-switch; but you can now set up separate reverb channels (Reverb A and B) using the two sets of identical controls for Damping, Time, Mod (chorus modulation) and

Level, and engaging the “Reverb” footswitch to toggle between those presets. There’s no stereo out for the DMLR, but the novel “Sustain” momentary footswitch and its knob is a thoughtful inclusion for ambient prolonging of the reverb’s decay time.

The Dual Pugilist Distortion offers the same heavy-duty dual gain as the original, but now arrives with two independent distortion circuits (Distortion A and B) with Level, Tone and Gain controls for each and separate footswitches (A and B). The real show-stopper is the “Mode” switch for three versatile “routing” options: Mute, Series and Bypass (Parallel). Mute allows for crafting one distortion (A) and the ability to layer an additional one (B) on top of it for more burly complexity similar to a boost. Series is your typical mode for stacking two distortions as if they were two separate pedals, and Bypass enables you to blend two different distortions from the A and B circuits using the onboard Blend knob, or even a clean sound with a distorted tone. For additional tonal sculpting, the DPD includes a master shelving EQ with High and Low controls.

PERFORMANCE There’s been an unusual uptick and fervor for reverb pedals that go past the cavernous depths in favor of ones that reach deep space and beyond. And if the outer limits of verb is your destination,

then the Dual Marine Layer Reverb may fall short of your expectations, but that’s not to say it should be overlooked. If anything, the Dual Marine Layer Reverb is an immersive reverb meant to enhance your guitar tone, and one where you can easily craft expressively ambient and dreamlike verbs that can be infinitely sustained.

The way I hear it, deep, deeper and deepest (with reflections), is the best way to describe the Room, Hall and Shimmer reverbs respectively — but keep in mind, you can only choose one reverb “type” to footswitch between your two presets. No matter what reverb you select, turning the Damping and Time knobs clockwise will generate a chasmic and dimensional sound with shorter and tighter reverb tails, but decreasing the Damping knob counterclockwise (toward no damping) will provoke a sustained and drifting reverb tail that many shoegazers will find musically useable, and holding down the Sustain footswitch will hold down that regenerative shimmer endlessly. Another highlight is the Mod knob for its warm choral effect that never leans toward syrupy or detuned, and keeping it midway makes your reverb tone lush without sounding overly affected. For its airy wash of reverbs it provides, not to mention having two footswitchable settings at your disposal, I find the Dual Marine



Layer Reverb to be an essential bread-and-butter reverb rather than one of those special-effects generators.

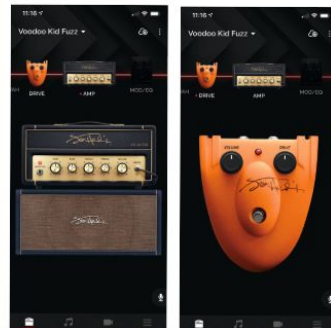
For the pedal purveyors that deal in dirt, most (like myself) will find the Duel Pugilist Distortion a satisfyingly worthy contender in the middleweight distortion division. Obviously, more is more, and having two distortions in one pedal with multiple operating modes makes the DPD an enticing gain box. For one, the DPD doesn't sound like anything else as far as other distortions go; it sits somewhere between a beefed-up overdrive and a fat distortion that crunches with plucky grind, all while retaining firm note definition. It's quite a musical gain that could replace your favorite overdrive because you can dial it back to achieve much of that Screamer-vibe but without the mid-heavy coloration. And, of course, if you want it to sound ferocious, it does that too, but metalers may want to look elsewhere. It has quite a spectrum of gain, and depending on how you route its signal path from its Mode switch, you can use it as a boost or blend or stack it to get plenty of chunky sustain. I loved using it as two separate distortion boxes with the ability to get more filthy as I switched between the A and B footswitches.

CHEAT SHEET



STREET PRICE: \$229.99 each
MANUFACTURER:
 Fender, fender.com

- The Dual Marine Layer Reverb offers three reverb algorithms and two independent footswitchable settings, and a sustain switch to trigger infinite shimmering reverb.
- The Duel Pugilist Distortion offers two independent gain channels with separate footswitches, and three modes for stacking, layering or blending the distortions.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:**
 The Dual Marine Layer Reverb and Duel Pugilist Distortion double up on the control set of their original namesakes as 2-in-1 stompboxes with exceptional tones and versatility.



Buzz Bin

Experience Jimi Hendrix for Spark

IF YOU HAVEN'T tried out Positive Grid's Spark, you really should. So far, nearly 300K users own this state-of-the-art amplifier, which offers a wealth of stellar-sounding onboard virtual amps and effects curated from Positive Grid's BIAS tone engine. Spark also includes advanced features like Smart Jam and Auto Chords, plus a tone library of well over 10,000 preset tones — created by users and artists — that you can access and download when paired with Spark's free mobile app. This practical combination truly puts Spark in the category of a "smart" desktop amp that serves as an ever-evolving practicing tool for guitarists. Considering this, wouldn't you want the ability to jam along to some classic songs by one of the most influential guitarists of all time while playing through his modeled gear? If you think that makes perfect sense, well, so does Positive Grid. To celebrate the company's 10th anniversary, they partnered with Authentic Hendrix LLC to release the Experience Jimi Hendrix Official Gear Collection for Spark as an in-app purchase.

This incredible collection features highly detailed emulations of six amps and six effects that Hendrix famously used throughout his career, all of which you can access from the Spark app. What's cool is you can preview each one, select and learn more about how Hendrix used it, and download its "Official Presets" to use as a launchpad in crafting your own virtual rig. The models sound convincingly great (I particularly loved the J.H. Axle Fuzz and J.H. D-Show Master), and you can absolutely move knobs and tweak settings to create unique tones that you can save to satisfy your inner-Jimi urges. In keeping with the enduring legacy of this musical giant, the app contains a "Famous Moments" story section, which takes you on an interactive timeline of Hendrix's artistic journey. It's beautifully presented — with iconic photography and a "Milestone Songs" inclusion — and also details how his incendiary style of playing forever changed the guitar world. I enjoyed the app's Auto Tone function, where you can jam along to Hendrix's career-defining songs, from the simple-but-tricky "Hey Joe" to the more challenging "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)." Each song calls up Jimi's specific rig for that track and automatically switches preset sounds as you follow the displayed chord changes measure by measure. Even though transitions between presets have a slight hiccup and the sounds are "close enough for rock 'n' roll," Auto Tone is still a great deal of fun. But more importantly, no Monterey Strats were set ablaze as I struggled through the changes.

— Paul Riaro

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MANUFACTURER: Positive Grid, positivegrid.com/jimi-hendrix



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FOR THE PLANET

IN DEEP

by Andy Aledort



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ALL I'VE GOT TO DO IS DREAM

Soloing over the Allman Brothers' "Dreams," part 2

LAST MONTH, I introduced a few approaches to soloing over the two-chord vamp from the classic Allman Brothers Band song "Dreams." As I stated, Duane Allman's solo improvisations on this song are played over alternating C/D and D chords. The song is played in $\frac{6}{8}$ meter, which may be counted "one two three, four five six," and each chord is played for one bar. I also introduced the concept of utilizing three different scales as a basis for soloing: the D Mixolydian mode (D, E, F \sharp , G, A, B, C), D major pentatonic (D, E, F \sharp , A, B) and D major hexatonic (D, E, F \sharp , G, A, B). This month, we'll expand our investigation of various soloing approaches to take with this vamp.

To review, **FIGURE 1** illustrates C/D and D chord voicings akin to what are played during the solo sections of "Dreams," and **FIGURE 2** shows these alternating chords within the rhythmic structure of $\frac{6}{8}$ meter. **FIGURE 3** offers a fingering pattern for D Mixolydian that begins in 7th position and descends to 4th then 2nd position. As you will find, switching to different scale positions and patterns in this way during a solo will aid greatly in presenting more opportunities for melodic invention.

As I pointed out last month, D Mixolydian includes the chord tones of both C and D major triads — C, E, G and D, F \sharp , A. Duane liked to structure his improvised phrases in ways that would illustrate strong harmonic connections to the underlying chords. In other words, when playing over C/D, he emphasizes the notes C, E and G. When playing over D, he emphasizes D, F \sharp and A.

Using chord tones as pivot points during one's improvisation is a tremendously useful tool that helps you create a continual flow of "target," or "magnet," notes while also encouraging melodic resolution from one set of chord tones to the next as the solo develops. All of the great improvisers, such as Allman and Dickey Betts, have the ability to seamlessly weave beautiful melodies over long solos by utilizing this simple construct.

FIGURE 4 offers a 12-bar improvised solo played over the repeating C/D - D chord progression. In bar 1, I bend a B note up a half step to C, a triadic chord tone of C

FIG. 1

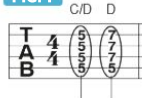


FIG. 2

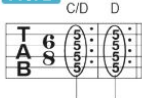


FIG. 3 D Mixolydian mode

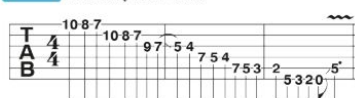
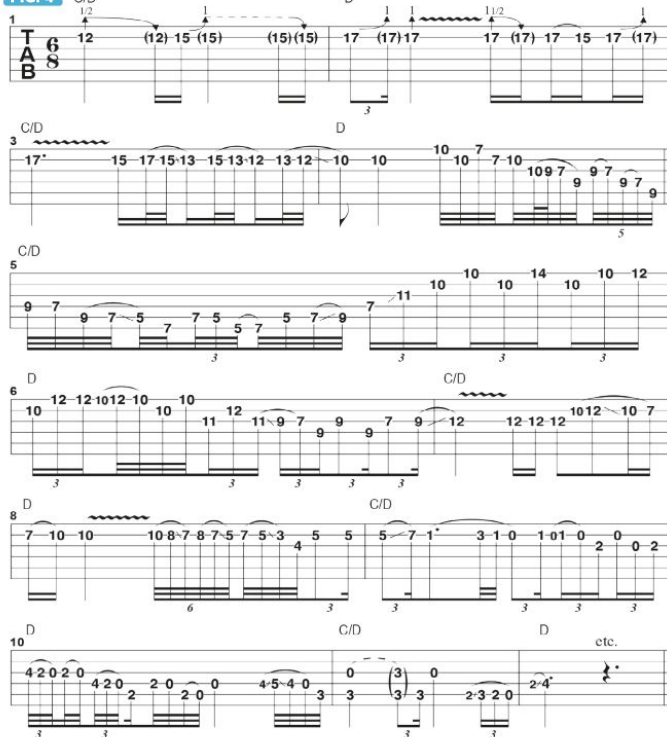


FIG. 4



major, followed by a whole-step bend from D to E, again targeting a triadic chord tone of C major. As the chord changes to D in bar 2, I continue this approach via a whole-step bend from E to F \sharp , similarly targeting a triadic chord tone, this time of D major.

In bars 3-6, I emphasize a variety of fast rhythmic phrases, starting on beat 4 of bar 3 with a descending line based on shifting

combinations of 16th notes and 32nd notes. In bar 4, these fast phrases become a little more complex with the combination of 32nd and 64th notes.

As you play through and listen to this solo, focus on the various rhythmic ideas, or *motifs*, that are explored, as these rhythms themselves offer great opportunities for creative melodic invention.

Guitar World Associate Editor Andy Aledort is recognized worldwide for his vast contributions to guitar instruction, via his many best-selling instructional DVDs, transcription books and online lessons.

THE GRISTLE REPORT

by Greg Koch



For video of this lesson, go to
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ANGER MANGEMENT

A breakdown of the harmonically intricate "Mean Streak," part 2

LAST MONTH, WE began our investigation into a song of mine called "Mean Streak," which is basically a mutated 12-bar blues that includes chords that present the opportunity to infuse some altered-dominant mayhem, if you will. We were specifically addressing the section of the tune that's built from the chord progression E7⁹45 - A7⁵ - D7⁹ - G#13. That last chord may alternatively be thought of as A13 and, either way, it ultimately resolves to G13. And as I demonstrated in the previous column, one can easily utilize the symmetrically structured E whole-tone scale (E, F[♯], G[♯], B[♭], C, D) to play over the first, third and fourth chords in this section. Over A7⁵, you can simply move it up a half step, to the F whole-tone scale (F, G, A, B, C[♯], D[♯]), which is the same as the A whole-tone scale and may be thought of as such.

FIGURE 1 illustrates our E7⁹45 voicing, which moves to chord voicings for A7⁵, D7⁹ and G#13. One soloing approach that works well is very simple, in that we can think "A blues scale" over everything, with licks like those demonstrated in **FIGURE 2**.

Another great option over the E7⁹45 chord is the A harmonic minor scale (A, B, C, D, E, F, G[♯]). **FIGURE 3** offers a phrase based on this scale that additionally includes the flatted 5th, E[♭], as a passing tone. So, in this instance, I'm thinking of the E chord as the V (five) chord in an A minor blues, or as an altered II - V (two - five) in the key of G minor. **FIGURE 4** presents another way to negotiate the scale over the E7⁹45 chord.

The next chord in the progression is A7⁵, so we can incorporate that featured raised 5th, F (actually E[♯]), relative to the chord's A root note, into our improvised lines, which leads me to the B[♭] melodic minor scale (B[♭], C, D[♭], E[♭], F, G, A). **FIGURE 5** shows the scale played in one octave following the A7⁵ chord. In **FIGURE 6**, I flesh out the B[♭] melodic minor scale further, so that you can see how it lays on the fretboard relative to these chord voicings of A7⁵ and D7⁹.

When I get to the last three chords, D7⁹ - G#13 - G13, they go by quickly, and I can utilize what's known as the G[♯] (or A[♭])

Lydian-dominant mode, which is the fourth mode of the E[♭] melodic minor scale. As shown in **FIGURE 7**, the notes of G[♯] Lydian-dominant (or A[♭] Lydian dominant) are, in descending order, A[♭], G[♯], F, E[♭], D, C, B[♭]. In relation to a D tonal center, these same seven notes can also be analyzed as forming the D altered-dominant scale, or D super-Locrian mode (D, E[♭], F, F[♯], G[♯], A[♯], C).

As I stated, these chords change quickly, which means you really don't have much time to think, "What scale am I supposed to play?" I find that the best approach is to

familiarize yourself with the scale and with smaller sections and patterns of it for melodic invention, and use snippets that you can drop in here and there. It's good to have some knowledge of music theory, but not to where it ends up becoming intimidating or distracting, because it is the *musicality* of your lines, whatever scale they may be based on, that is of the utmost importance.

Hey folks, this is my last column for the time being. I had a lot of fun creating these lessons, and I hope you've enjoyed and benefited from them! See you down the road.

Greg Koch is a large human who coaxes guitars into submission in a way that has left an indelible print on the psyches of many Earth dwellers. Visit GregKoch.com to check out his recordings, instructional materials, signature musical devices and colorful hats.



For video of this lesson, go to
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SOLEMN REVERENCE

A look at “Gone,” my musical ode to the tragedy of 9/11

WHEN I RELEASED my album *Resolution* in 2006, on Steve Vai's Favored Nations label, it included songs I had been working on over the previous five years. While recording, it took some work to find the right sounds and blend of various guitars, and there was something that Steve had said to me while I was recording my previous album that stuck with me: he said, "I love the songs with only one guitar, backed by just bass and drums, because I can clearly hear your fingers on the frets." That little nugget of positivity from him made me think, "What if I recorded an entire album like that?" And that is what *Resolution* became.

Having made the decision to go with just one guitar on the tracks, it took me down the path of reimagining songs I had originally composed with a combination of rhythm and lead parts. The question now became “how can I cover the melody and harmony with only bass and drums behind me?” And so I had to devise ways to state the melody while also working in some chord tones underneath, in order to fill out or imply the inherent harmony.

A good example of this approach is found in the track “Gone,” which I wrote on September 11, 2001, in the immediate aftermath of the horrific events of that day. The song turned into a sadly beautiful chord-melody type of performance, and it begins with unaccompanied guitar before the band comes in. So let’s take a look at how I came up with the chord voicings to support the melody.

FIGURE 1 illustrates the tune's opening seven bars, which convey a G minor tonality. After the initial strum of Am7⁵, for which I used an unusual voicing that's played on the bottom four strings, I add the melody on the G string, articulated with hammer-ons, pull-offs, bends, vibratos and finger slides, all in the quest for a vocal-like performance. I then follow this with D7⁹, also fretted on the bottom four strings.

Bar 3 begins with an arpeggiation of another unusual bottom-four-strings voicing, this one of Gm(add9), and the further development of the melodic line on the G string, followed in bar 4 with yet another unusual voicing, this one for A7/E. Bar 5 includes no

FIG. 1

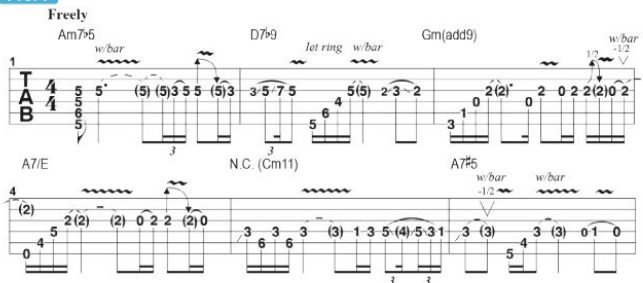


FIG. 2

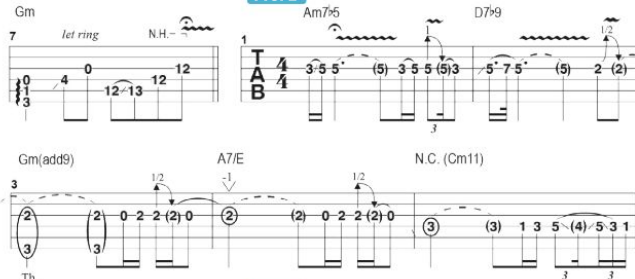
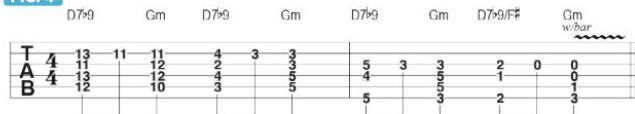


FIG. 3



FIG. 4



actual chord, but the melody implies a Cmi1 sound. The statement wraps up in the next two bars with a slightly unorthodox II - V (two - five) progression of A(#5) - D#5 and the resolution of this first melodic statement to a Gm chord in bar 7, which I then embellish with an ascending phrase that includes a couple of natural harmonics (N.H.).

A useful thing to do is to look at the melody alone, as shown in **FIGURE 2**, as the mel-

ody itself — as a good melody should — pulls one's ear in the direction of the harmony. Throughout, the tonality of the G harmonic minor scale (G, A, B \flat , C, D, E \flat , F \sharp) is clearly conveyed. **FIGURE 3** illustrates this scale.

As you can hear, *chordal resolution* is a key ingredient in this piece of music. **FIGURE 4** offers some more options for resolving the V (five) dominant chord, D7♭9, to the i (one) minor chord, Gm.

Andy Timmons is a world-renowned guitarist known for his work with the Andy Timmons Band, as well as Danger Danger and Simon Phillips. Visit andytimmons.com and guitarxperience.net to check out his recordings and many instructional releases

ALL EARS

by Jake Bowen
of Periphery



For video of this lesson, go to
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RANGE EXPANSION

Using drop tunings, octave effects and layered tones to create a deep, huge sound

TODAY I'D LIKE to talk about some effective ways that you can reinforce your rhythm guitar tone when recording, by double-tracking parts and utilizing unusual tunings, octave effects and split-coil tones. To illustrate, I will cite the intro riff I wrote and recorded for the Periphery song "Follow Your Ghost," from *Periphery IV: Hail Stan*.

I play this song on a 6-string guitar that's tuned to what many players refer to as "drop-A," which is drop-B tuning (low to high: B, A, D, G, B, E), transposed down a whole step. So, low to high, the strings are tuned to A, G, C, F, A, D. An interesting thing about this tuning is that it puts your bottom two strings almost an octave apart, specifically a minor 7th interval — B up to A. So if you finger root looks an feels like a regular two-note, root-5th power chord shape on these strings, the two notes are actually an octave apart. It's like playing a 7-string guitar with a low B string but without a low E.

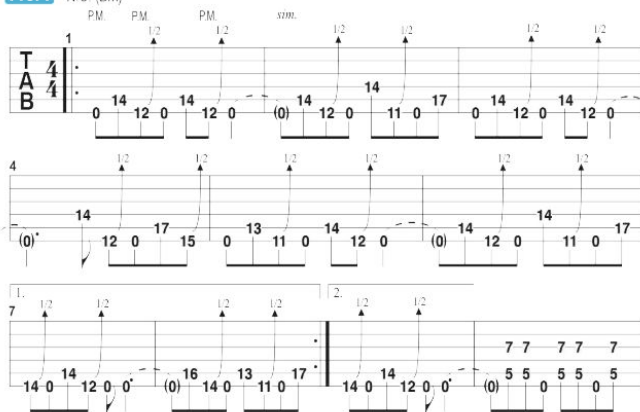
As a lot of guitarists are inclined to do when transposing a tuning down a half step, whole step, minor 3rd, etc., I prefer to not acknowledge the pitch transposition and instead just think of, visualize and refer to the notes "normally," meaning as if I were playing in a "regular" tuning, which in this case would be drop-B. So even though my 6th string is tuned down to A, I'll still think of it as "B," and I'll think of the 5th string as my "A" string, even though it's tuned to G. And the same with any fretted notes on any of the strings.

When tracking our rhythm parts, my Periphery co-guitarists Misha Mansoor and Mark Holcomb and I usually like to double-track each of our individual parts and pan the two tracks hard left and right. **FIGURE 1** illustrates the main riff from "Follow Your Ghost," which I tracked this way.

As you'll see in bar 1, the open low B note (which is actually A at concert pitch) is played alternately against a B note two octaves higher, located on the A string's 14th fret. In between these double-octave B notes, I add an additional B that's only one

Tune to drop-B tuning, down one whole step (low to high: A, G, C, F, A, D)
All music sounds in the key of A minor, one whole step lower than written.

FIG. 1 N.C. (Bm)



octave above the open low B, played at the 12th fret on that string. Every time I fret this note here, I'll bend it up slightly, approximately a half step, which lends the riff a haunting, demonic quality. When bending your lowest string like this, you have no choice but to pull it in toward the middle strings, as pushing the string upward, using the more common push-bending technique, would cause it to fall off the side of the fretboard "cliff."

In bar 2, I repeat the first two beats from bar 1 then veer off in a different direction and add a high E note on the D string's 14th fret, followed by A \sharp at the 11th fret on the low B string. Bar 3 is a restatement of bar 1, and in bar 4, I allow the open low B note to ring through the first one and one half beats, followed by the high B note on the A string's 14th fret and the "middle B" at the 12th fret on the bottom string. I end the bar by reaching up to D at the 17th fret on the A string followed by D an octave lower, at the 15th fret on the bottom string, again using what looks like a conventional power chord fingering shape that I'm shifting around the fretboard.

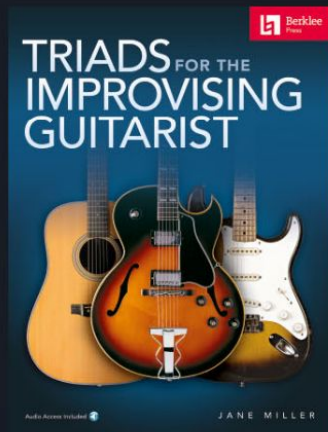
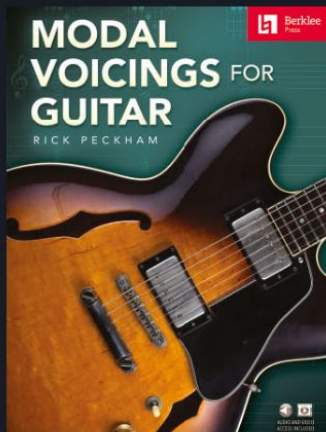
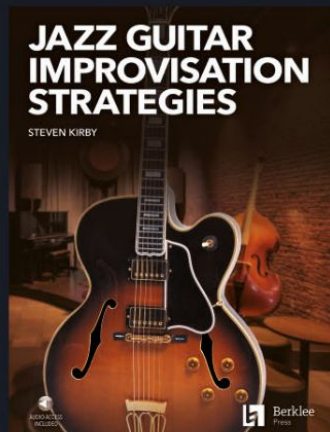
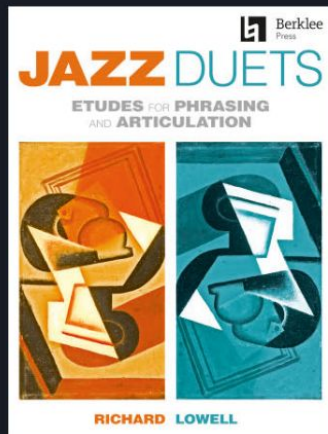
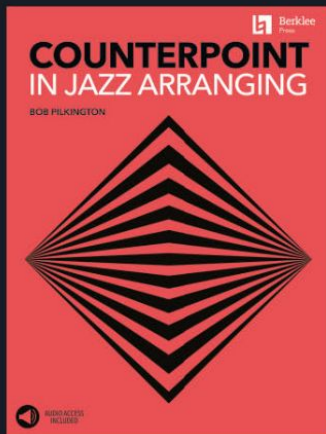
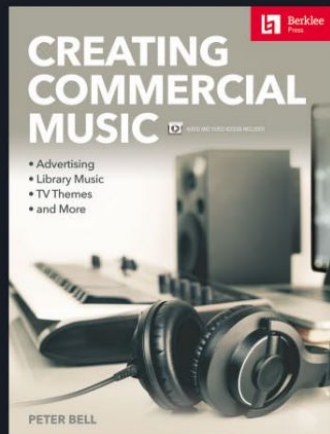
In bar 5, the riff becomes more "warped," as I include more of the A \sharp notes at the 11th fret on the bottom string, which I similarly bend up a half step. The first eight-bar section ends with C \sharp octaves at the 14th and 16th frets on the bottom two strings, followed by a shift down to A \sharp octaves at the 11th and 13th frets. The initial six bars then repeat, and the entire form ends in the final two bars with strummed octaves on D, fretted on the A and G strings down in 5th position, using the conventional octave shape on non-adjacent strings and played in a syncopated rhythm against the open low B note. Throughout the riff, the focus is on the subtle shifts in rhythmic syncopation, with the emphasis changing from the downbeats to the eighth-note upbeats.

When recording this song, I additionally tracked different pairs of left and right rhythm guitars that are treated with a sub-octave effect with a wet/dry mix, and I also utilized pickup coil-tapping to add some single-coil "snap" to the overall tone. Ultimately, I think I achieved a wide, multi-dimensional sound while playing what's essentially the same rhythm part throughout.

Jake Bowen is a key member of the guitar triumvirate in the critically acclaimed prog metal band Periphery, whose next studio album will be released in early 2022. His new solo album, *The Daily Sun*, is out now.

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HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS By Jimmy Brown



"WAY COOL JR."

Ratt



FEATURING AN INFECTIOUS

swing-16ths groove and soulful guitar riffs and licks, this late-Eighties gem showcases Ratt's highly appealing

"blues-rock hair metal" swagger. Guitarists Warren DeMartini and Robbin Crosby serve up tastefully crafted parts that incorporate elements of traditional, "swampy" blues playing, such as fingerpicking open-position E minor pentatonic melodies over a "dead thumb" open low-E-string pedal tone and chromatically resolving 6th intervals (see bars 13, 20 and 56), combined with flashy modern rock techniques like palm muting (P.M.), string bends, finger vibratos and pinch harmonics (P.H.).

When playing the song's intro and first verse, which are performed fingerstyle, you'll want to keep your pick tucked into your palm for quick retrieval and deployment at bar 16, to play the subsequent riffs leading up to the song's first pre-chorus. Note the use of *hybrid picking* (pick and fingers technique) to articulate the previously mentioned 6th intervals in bar 20, which are on non-adjacent strings.

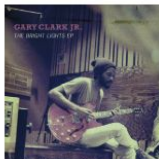
The song's pre-chorus features an inventive chord progression that incorporates the use of classical-style inversions, specifically with the 3rd of the chord in the bass in the F \sharp /A \sharp and E/G \sharp voicings. Notice how, in his Gtr. 1 part, DeMartini alternates between picking the descending bass notes on his low E string with strumming or picking higher chord tones on the D, G and B strings. Using string skipping to break up the chords in this way produces a tighter sound than just strumming all the notes of each chord together, and it also adds an interesting rhythmic flair to the figure. At the end of the second and third pre-choruses, at bar 36, the guitarist again employs hybrid picking, to double the ascending bass line "walk-up" with downstrokes while plucking the open B and high E strings, similar to what Led Zepelin's Jimmy Page did in "The Lemon Song."

Also showcased here is DeMartini's signature flashy "blues-rock shred" soloing, with his liberal use of pull-offs, hammer-ons and finger slides in the performance of smoothly flowing streams of 16th-note-triplet runs, as well as his polished slide playing (see the Gtr. 3 part).



"DON'T OWE YOU A THANG"

Gary Clark Jr.



MODERN BLUES-ROCK

sensation Gary Clark Jr. channels the spirits of great, old-school blues legends like Robert Johnson, Elizabeth Cotten

and John Lee Hooker to craft this song's brisk, "swampy" uptempo riffs, which he performs fingerstyle on an organically tube-overdriven electric guitar, capoed at the 5th fret (see the Gtr. 1 part). Clark builds the song's main riff around a 1st-position open E7 chord shape, which he essentially vamps on for most of the song and embellishes with single-note fills based on the E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D). Due to the capo usage, everything gets transposed up a perfect 4th, to the key of A.

The foundation of the song's main riff is the steadily thumping bass line played on the open low E string—that "dead thumb" self-accompaniment style mentioned in the previous lesson—which Clark performs using repeating downstrokes with his thumb, pretty much non-stop throughout most of the song, the notable exceptions being during section C, which is the song's de facto chorus, where he goes up to the V (five) chord, B7, then the IV (four chord), A, momentarily switching to an alternating bass pattern, and during his guitar solo at section D, where the guitarist takes a break from self-accompanying and lets his rhythm section carry the groove while he plays melodic licks on the higher strings.

When studying the tabs for the Gtr. 1 part during the intro and verses, note that, while the rhythms of the lower and higher notes are consolidated into mostly eighth notes, the dead thumb rhythm is essentially just quarter notes played on every beat ("one, two, three, four"). In each of these bars, however, Clark will, either on beat 3 or beat 4, fret the G note on the low E string's 3rd fret and pull-off to the open string in an eighth-note rhythm. But the thumb is still striking the string in a steady quarter-note rhythm. Getting this riff pattern and groove up to speed can be challenging and tricky at first. A good approach is to start by looping the two-bar pattern in bars 3 and 4 (labeled *Rhy. Fig. 1*), beginning slowly and gradually ramping up the tempo as the two-hand coordination becomes established.



"ROCK AND ROLL NEVER FORGETS"

Bob Seger



SILVER BULLET

guitarist Drew Abbott kicks off this spirited, uptempo rock and roll song with a bright-toned, punchy single-note

riff in E, for which he alternates between notes fretted on the G and B strings and uses decorative finger slides to add flair to the part (see bars 1-3). Due to the continual string crossing here, with only one note being played on each string before switching to the other, the riff is most easily and efficiently picked using downstrokes on the G string and upstrokes on the B string. You're essentially alternate picking, except during the occasional tied notes and legato finger slides, for which the pick passes over the string with a "phantom" downstroke or upstroke that doesn't actually strike it.

Abbott crafted a tasty guitar solo for this song (see section F), using country-rock-style oblique double-stop bends over the F \sharp chords in bars 37 and 41, which sweetly outline the chord's major tonality before it changes to F \sharp m. To play the initial bend in bar 37, barre your pinkie (4) across the top two strings at the 14th fret and use your ring finger (3) to bend the G string at the 13th fret, assisted one fret below by the middle finger (2), as you hook your thumb around the top side of the fretboard for anchorage. Take great care not to overshoot or undershoot the pitch of the whole-step bend—from G \sharp up to A \sharp —as you're targeting the major 3rd of the underlying F \sharp chord. In this specific situation, pitch accuracy and bending perfectly in tune, like a country pedal steel player would, is more important than sounding bluesy and taking liberties with the pitch of the bend, which can be totally fine and cool sounding to do in some cases, but not here.

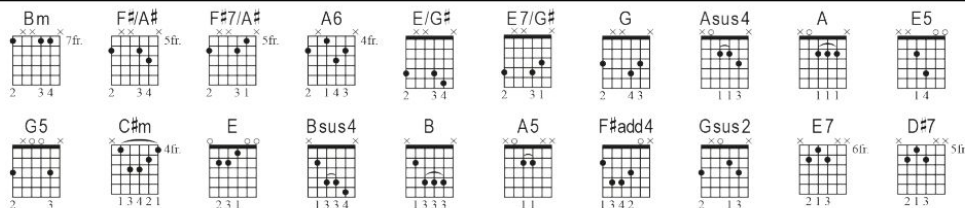
Abbott similarly employs this same oblique double-stop bend technique in his outro guitar solo (see section I), only here he does it a whole step and two frets lower, in 9th position, over an E tonal center. Interestingly, notice that some of the bends are only a half step, from F \sharp up to G, and others are a whole step, from F \sharp to G \sharp . The harmonic openness of the underlying E5 chord allows the soloist to utilize both the major and minor 3rd to color his licks in bluesy, rock and roll fashion.

"WAY COOL JR."

Ratt

As heard on **REACH FOR THE SKY**

Words by STEPHEN E. PEARCY, WARREN DEMARTINI and BEAU HILL • Transcribed by JEFF PERRIN



A Intro (0:00)

Moderate Rock ♩ = 90 w/swing-16ths feel (♩♩♩♩ 8-8-8-8)

Ow ow

N.C.

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist. and light delay effect)

N.C. (E5)

(perc.)

(fingerstyle)

TAB 4/4

1 2

2 (2)(2)(2)(2)(2)(2)(2)(2) 2 (2)(2)(2)(2)(2) 0 2

P.M. P.M. P.M.

0 0 0 0 2 (2) 0 2 (2) 0 2

Ow

Rah

Gtr. 1

6 P.M. P.M. P.M.

2 0 0 2 (2) 0 2 (2) 0 2

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2 (2) (2) 0 2 2 0 1 0

3

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.)

P.M.

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Bass

14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Oh

let ring

**Doubled simile by clean elec. throughout*

P.M.

B 1st Verse (0:26)

New kid in town

Got fancy clothes

Old T-bird car baby

10

P.M.

Rhy. Fig. 1

P.M.

Bass Fig. 1

And you can tell your nose

He said Where is all the action in this town

13

P.M.

let ring

end Rhy. Fig. 1

end Bass Fig. 1

D 2nd Verse (1:11)

Heard he came from Memphis

Somewhere down south

Started hangin' with the blues crowd

N.C.(E5)

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 10)

27 Gtr. 1 P.M. P.H. P.H. P.M. P.H. P.H. P.M. P.H.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 10)

That's how he got that crazy sound

What is all this talking goin' 'round

She said

30 P.M. 1/2 w/pick and finger let ring

E 2nd and 3rd Pre-choruses (1:27, 2:39)

1. So good lookin' turns me on Out all night keeps me up 'till dawn The
 can't have fire without the flame Can't keep the fortune without the pain
 2. So good lookin' without and that's a fact Can't guitar is strapped on his back
 can't have fire without the flame Can't keep the fortune without the pain

Bm

F#A#

A#7/A#

A6

E/G#

E7/G#

Gtr. 3 substitutes Fill 1 on repeat (see below bar 42)

Gtr. 2 Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 22)

33 Gtr. 3

Gtr. 1 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 22)

girls all know he's Way Cool Jr.
 That's how he makes it when he's on his own
 Everybody know he's Way Cool Jr.
 That's how he makes it when he's on his own

Asus4

A

E5

Gtr. 3 substitutes Fill 2, 3rd time

E5

Fill 2

1., 3., 4. On 3rd Pre-chorus repeat, skip ahead to [1] 2nd chorus (bar 57)

1st and 3rd endings: You know you

35 Gtr. 3

Gtr. 1 P.M. P.M. w/pick and fingers

Gtr. 2

Bass

C#m
Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)

45

9 9 12 (12)

9 12 9 11 9 9 12 9 12 9 9 11 9 11 9 11 9

1/2

[illegible]

E

Bsus4

B

Bsus4

Gtrs. 1 and 2


Bass

[illegible] C_{2v}

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 simile (see bar 45)

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 4a simile (see bar 45)

Gtr. 4

49 

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 (see bar 45)

A5 Gtr. 4 Asus4 A F#add4

51

Gtr. 1 let ring

Gtr. 2 let ring

Bass

Detailed description: This system contains the first 51 measures of the song. It features four staves: Gtr. 4 (top), Gtr. 1, Gtr. 2, and Bass (bottom). Gtr. 4 has a melodic line with various fret numbers (9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17) and includes a 'let ring' instruction. Gtr. 1 and Gtr. 2 have similar melodic lines with fret numbers (2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17) and include a 'let ring' instruction. The Bass staff has a simple bass line with fret numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17). The system ends at measure 51.

H (2:29)

Go back to **H** 3rd Pre-chorus (bar 33)

N.C.(E5)

She said

53 grad. bend w/slide

Gtr. 1 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. w/pick and finger

Bass

Detailed description: This system contains measures 53 to 62. It features four staves: Gtr. 3 (top), Gtr. 1, Gtr. 2, and Bass (bottom). Gtr. 3 has a melodic line with fret numbers (15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 103, 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 143, 145, 147, 149, 151, 153, 155, 157, 159, 161, 163, 165, 167, 169, 171, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181, 183, 185, 187, 189, 191, 193, 195, 197, 199, 201, 203, 205, 207, 209, 211, 213, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 225, 227, 229, 231, 233, 235, 237, 239, 241, 243, 245, 247, 249, 251, 253, 255, 257, 259, 261, 263, 265, 267, 269, 271, 273, 275, 277, 279, 281, 283, 285, 287, 289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 299, 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315, 317, 319, 321, 323, 325, 327, 329, 331, 333, 335, 337, 339, 341, 343, 345, 347, 349, 351, 353, 355, 357, 359, 361, 363, 365, 367, 369, 371, 373, 375, 377, 379, 381, 383, 385, 387, 389, 391, 393, 395, 397, 399, 401, 403, 405, 407, 409, 411, 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2505, 2507, 2509, 2511, 2513, 2515, 2517, 2519, 2521, 2523, 2525, 2527, 2529, 2531, 2533, 2535, 2537, 2539, 2541, 2543, 2545, 2547, 2549, 2551, 2553, 2555, 2557, 2559, 2561, 2563, 2565, 2567, 2569, 2571, 2573, 2575, 2577, 2579, 2581, 2583, 2585, 2587, 2589, 2591, 2593, 2595, 2597, 2599, 2601, 2603, 2605, 2607, 2609, 2611, 2613, 2615, 2617, 2619, 2621, 2623, 2625, 2627, 2629, 2631, 2633, 2635, 2637, 2639, 2641, 2643, 2645, 2647, 2649, 2651, 2653, 2655, 2657, 2659, 2661, 2663, 2665, 2667, 2669, 2671, 2673, 2675, 2677, 2679, 2681, 2683, 2685, 2687, 2689, 2691, 2693, 2695, 2697, 2699, 2701, 2703, 2705, 2707, 2709, 2711, 2713, 2715, 2717, 2719, 2721, 2723, 2725, 2727, 2729, 2731, 2733, 2735, 2737, 2739, 2741, 2743, 2745, 2747, 2749, 2751, 2753, 2755, 2757, 2759, 2761, 2763, 2765, 2767, 2769, 2771, 2773, 2775, 2777, 2779, 2781, 2783, 2785, 2787, 2789, 2791, 2793, 2795, 2797, 2799, 2801, 2803, 2805, 2807, 2809, 2811, 2813, 2815, 2817, 2819, 2821, 2823, 2825, 2827, 2829, 2831, 2833, 2835, 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3169, 3171, 3173, 3175, 3177, 3179, 3181, 3183, 3185, 3187, 3189, 3191, 3193, 3195, 3197, 3199, 3201, 3203, 3205, 3207, 3209, 3211, 3213, 3215, 3217, 3219, 3221, 3223, 3225, 3227, 3229, 3231, 3233, 3235, 3237, 3239, 3241, 3243, 3245, 3247, 3249, 3251, 3253, 3255, 3257, 3259, 3261, 3263, 3265, 3267, 3269, 3271, 3273, 3275, 3277, 3279, 3281, 3283, 3285, 3287, 3289, 3291, 3293, 3295, 3297, 3299, 3301, 3303, 3305, 3307, 3309, 3311, 3313, 3315, 3317, 3319, 3321, 3323, 3325, 3327, 3329, 3331, 3333, 3335, 3337, 3339, 3341, 3343, 3345, 3347, 3349, 3351, 3353, 3355, 3357, 3359, 3361, 3363, 3365, 3367, 3369, 3371, 3373, 3375, 3377, 3379, 3381, 3383, 3385, 3387, 3389, 3391, 3393, 3395, 3397, 3399, 3401, 3403, 3405, 3407, 3409, 3411, 3413, 3415, 3417, 3419, 3421, 3423, 3425, 3427, 3429, 3431, 3433, 3435, 3437, 3439, 3441, 3443, 3445, 3447, 3449, 3451, 3453, 3455, 3457, 3459, 3461, 3463, 3465, 3467, 3469, 3471, 3473, 3475, 3477, 3479, 3481, 3483, 3485, 3487, 3489, 3491, 3493, 3495, 3497, 3499, 3501, 3503, 3505, 3507, 3509, 3511, 3513, 3515, 3517, 3519, 3521, 3523, 3525, 3527, 3529, 3531, 3533, 3535, 3537, 3539, 3541, 3543, 3545, 3547, 3549, 3551, 3553, 3555, 3557, 3559, 3561, 3563, 3565, 3567, 3569, 3571, 3573, 3575, 3577, 3579, 3581, 3583, 3585, 3587, 3589, 3591, 3593, 3595, 3597, 3599, 3601, 3603, 3605, 3607, 3609, 3611, 3613, 3615, 3617, 3619, 3621, 3623, 3625, 3627, 3629, 3631, 3633, 3635, 3637, 3639, 3641, 3643, 3645, 3647, 3649, 3651, 3653, 3655, 3657, 3659, 3661, 3663, 3665, 3667, 3669, 3671, 3673, 3675, 3677, 3679, 3681, 3683, 3685, 3687, 3689, 3691, 3693, 3695, 3697, 3699, 3701, 3703, 3705, 3707, 3709, 3711, 3713, 3715, 3717, 3719, 3721, 3723, 3725, 3727, 3729, 3731, 3733, 3735, 3737, 3739, 3741, 3743, 3745, 3747, 3749, 3751, 3753, 3755, 3757, 3759, 3761, 3763, 3765, 3767, 3769, 3771, 3773, 3775, 3777, 3779, 3781, 3783, 3785, 3787, 3789, 3791, 3793, 3795, 3797, 3799, 3801, 3803, 3805, 3807, 3809, 3811, 3813, 3815, 3817, 3819, 3821, 3823, 3825, 3827, 3829, 3831, 3833, 3835, 3837, 3839, 3841, 3843, 3845, 3847, 3849, 3851, 3853, 3855, 3857, 3859, 3861, 3863, 3865, 3867, 3869, 3871, 3873, 3875, 3877, 3879, 3881, 3883, 3885, 3887, 3889, 3891, 3893, 3895, 3897, 3899, 3901, 3903, 3905, 3907, 3909, 3911, 3913, 3915, 3917, 3919, 3921, 3923, 3925, 3927, 3929, 3931, 3933, 3935, 3937, 3939, 3941, 3943, 3945, 3947, 3949, 3951, 3953, 3955, 3957, 3959, 3961, 3963, 3965, 3967, 3969, 3971, 3973, 3975, 3977, 3979, 3981, 3983, 3985, 3987, 3989, 3991, 3993, 3995, 3997, 3999, 4001, 4003, 4005, 4007, 4009, 4011, 4013, 4015, 4017, 4019, 4021, 4023, 4025, 4027, 4029, 4031, 4033, 4035, 4037, 4039, 4041, 4043, 4045, 4047, 4049, 4051, 4053, 4055, 4057, 4059, 4061, 4063, 4065, 4067, 4069, 4071, 4073, 4075, 4077, 4

gonna live it up or never live it down

Bass substitutes Bass Fill 1 (see below)

Bass substitutes Bass Fill 2 (see below)

| | | | |
|----|-------|---|----------|
| G5 | Asus4 | A | N.C.(E5) |
|----|-------|---|----------|

Bass Fill 1 (3:19)

Bass Fill 2 (3:25)

Fill 3 (3:44)

Gr. 3 N.C. (E5)

TAB 4/4

9 9

N.C. (E5)

4. Gtr. 1

• P.M. • P.M. • P.M. $\frac{1}{2}$ •

2 0 0 2 (2) 0 2 (2) 0 2

Gtr. 2

• P.M. • P.M. • P.M. • P.M.

2 0 0 2 2 2 2 0

Rhy. Fig. 7

• P.M. • P.M. • P.M. • P.M.

2 2 0 2 2 0 0

Gtr. 1
*P.M. ⑥

77 0 3 2 1 2 2 2 (2) 0 2 2 0 2 (2) 0 2 2 0 2 (2) 0 2

*Palm mute on bottom string only.

80 P.M. (6) 0 3 2 1 P.M. P.M. P.M. 1/2 P.M. (6) 0 3 0 0 1/4 1/2

[illegible]

"DON'T OWE YOU A THANG"

Gary Clark Jr.

As heard on **THE BRIGHT LIGHTS EP**

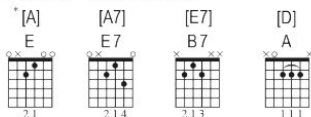
Words and Music by GARY CLARK, JR. • Transcribed by JEFF PERRIN

Guitar 1 is capoed at the 5th fret.

Guitar 2 is in open A tuning (low to high: E, A, E, A, C#, E).

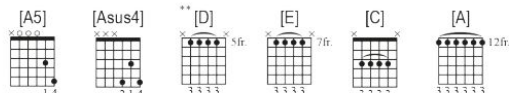
Bass tuning (low to high): E, A, D, G.

chords for Guitar 1 (capo 5)



*All chord shapes and tablature positions are relative to the capo.
Chord names in brackets reflect concert-key harmony [key of A].

chords Guitar 2 (open A tuning)



**D, E, C, and A chords played w/slide on ring finger.

A Intro (0 00)

Fast Blues Shuffle ♩ = 236 (♩ = ♩³♩)

E E7 E E7 E

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/overdrive, capo 5)
(fingerstyle)

P.M. - 0

let ring - - -

Rhy. Fig. 1

(play 3 times)

let ring - - -

*Chord symbol reflects overall harmony.

Bass

(3rd time)

(♩ = 222)

[A5]

[Asus4] [A5]

[Asus4] [A5]

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 3)

Gtr. 2 (w/light overdrive)

Rhy. Fig. 2

P.M. - - - - -

end Rhy. Fig. 2

5 P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

Bass

Bass Fig. 1

Ain't got no excuses
Ain't got no excuses
Ain't got no excuses
Ain't got no excuses

baby
baby
baby
baby

for hangin' at the bar
But goodness knows deal
I'm doin' my
I'm drinkin' at the bar

E

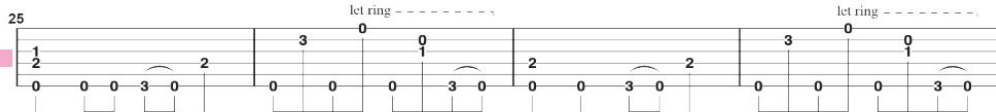
E7

E

E7

Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fig. 3
3rd and 4th verses (see bar 11)

Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fill, 2
3rd verse (see below bar 23)



I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing

baby
baby
baby
mama

I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing

E

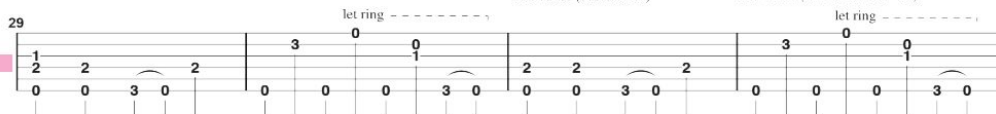
E7

E

E7

Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fig. 3
2nd verse (see bar 11)

Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fill, 2
3rd verse (see below bar 23)



I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing

baby
baby
baby
baby

I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing
I don't owe you a thing

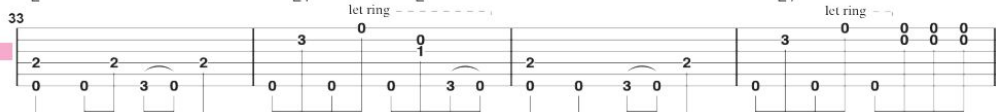
Oh we
Oh we
Oh we
'Cause we

E

E7

E

E7



C (0 43, 1 10, 2 29, 2 56)

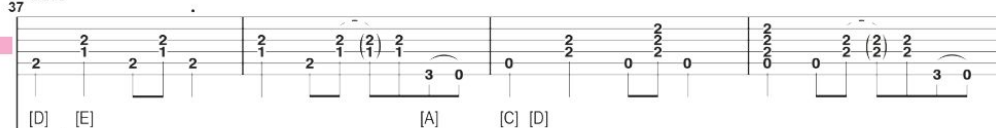
ain't gettin' married

I ain't buyin' you no diamond

B7

A

Gtr. 1



[D] [E]

[A]

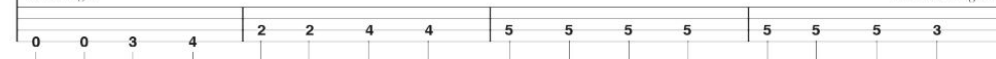
[C] [D]

Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 4
w/slide

end Rhy. Fig. 4

Bass
Bass Fig. 2

end Bass Fig. 2



That's alright

E7

Gtr. 1

[A5]

Bass

2.

D **Guitar Solo** (1:19)

Here it is baby

Woo

E

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 simile, 16 times (see bar 7)

[A]

[A]

50

54

[illegible]

62 (trm. strum)

5 5 5 5 5 5 3 3 5 5 5 5 3 3 3 3

[illegible]

70 Gtr. 1 Uh

Bass plays first eight bars of Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 5)

74

Gtr. 1

E7

E

C'mon

E7

let ring

Gtr. 2

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

[C]

E Breakdown (1.54)

This all you get now baby

this all you get

E
Gtr. 1

78

[A]
Gtr. 2

Bass first bar of Bass Fig. 1 12 times (see bar 5)

This all you get now baby

this all you get

w/fdbk. (slight vibrato produced by shaking gtr. neck)

Gtr. 1

82

patch: G#

This all you get now mama

this all you get

86

Go back to [B] 3rd Verse (bar 21)

Just me and this guitar

baby

that's all you

get

90

w/fdbk.

pitch: B

G#

X 0

Bass plays last four bars of Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 5)

F (3.05)

ain't gettin' married

I ain't buying you no diamond

B7

A

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 (see bar 37)

Gtr. 1

94

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 37)

ring

And that's alright

But we

E E7 E

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see bar 7)

Gtr. 1

98

let ring -

[A5]
Bass

ain't gettin' married

I ain't buyin' you no diamond

B7 A

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 (see bar 37)

102

[E] [D]

G **Outro** (3:19)

(grad. decrease tempo)

Freely

ring

E

E7

Gtr. 1

106

let ring -

*Chord symbol reflects overall harmony.

[A]

Gtr. 2

[A7]

*Chord symbol reflects overall harmony.

“ROCK AND ROLL NEVER FORGETS”

Bob Seger

As heard on **NIGHT MOVES**

Words and Music by BOB SEGER • Transcribed by ANDY ALEDORT



2fr.

A Intro (0:00)

Moderately Fast Rock ♩ = 146

(2nd time) 1. So you're a

1

E5 A5 E5

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/light dist.)

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/light dist.)

Rhy. Fig. 1

Bass

Bass Fig. 1

end Rhy. Fig. 1

end Bass Fig. 1

B Verses (0:13, 0:50)

(1.) little bit older and a lot less bolder than you used to be
 (2.) get yourself a partner go down to the concert or the local bar

So you
 Check the

F#5

E5

Gtr. 3 plays Fill 1 (see below)

5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (arr. for one gtr.)

Fill 1 (0:17, 0:23, 0:53, 1:00)

(E)
 Gtr. 3 (clean elec.)

Listen to the guitar player makin' it scream E5 All you gotta do is just make that scene tonight E5

29

(2/0) 0 0 0 5 0 4 0 0

0 3 4 3 4 2 2 0

(2/0) 2 0 4 0 5 0 4 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 4 0

(0) 0 4 0 5 0 4 7

0 0 4 0 5 0 4 0

(0) 0 4 0 5 0 4 7

0 0 4 0 5 0 4 0

B5 Hey tonight Ooh

33

4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7

7 7 7 7 4 5 6

7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7

9 9 9 9 9 9 7

F Guitar Solo (1:43)

F# F#m E5 F#

37

14 13 13 (13) 11 (11) 11 13 13 11

13 16 16 (16) 16 16

12 16 16 (16) 16

12 16 16 (16) 16

Gtrs. 1 and 2

2 4 3 4 3 4 2 (2/4) 2 4 4 4 4 2 2 2 4 2 (2) 4 2 2 4 0 0 4 0 2 0 0 4 4 2

Bass

2 2 2 2 2 2 0 0 0 0 4 5 4 7 0 0 0 0 4 5 4 7

Go back to **C** Pre-chorus (bar 13)

Well now

A5

41

14 13 (13) 11 13 11 11 13 (13) 13 11 9

11 13 11 13 (13) 13 11 9

12 12 12 12 12 12 11 (11) 9 11

11 (11) 9 11 9

(2/3) 2 3 3 4 4 4 2 (2/3) 2 3 3 4 4 4 2 (2/3) 2 3 3 4 4 4 2 (2/3) 2 3 3 4 4 4 2

2 2 2 2 2 2 0 0 0 0 4 5 4 7 0 0 0 0 4 5 4 7

I Outro Guitar Solo (2:58)

E5

A5

E5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Figs. 2 and 23a simile until fade (see bar 59)

Gtr. 3

63

Bass plays Bass. Fig. 2 until fade (see bar 59)

67

71

75

79

82

85

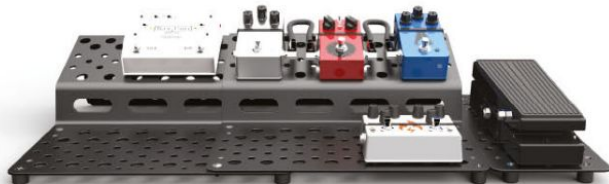
89

92

fade out

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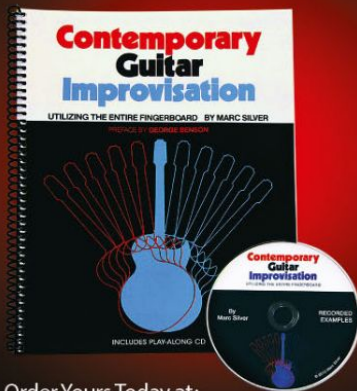
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"HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA"

DEAD KENNEDYS | *FRESH FRUIT FOR ROTTING VEGETABLES*, 1980 | GUITARIST: EAST BAY RAY | STORY BY CHRIS GILL



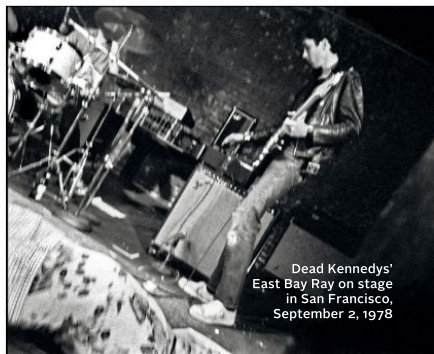
THE U.S. HARDCORE punk movement simmered under the surface during the late Seventies as numerous bands across the country experimented with controversial lyrics and sounds with a much rougher edge than the punk music that preceded it. When the Dead Kennedys released their debut album, *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables*, in 1980, American hardcore punk exploded like an erupting volcano. The album's release marked a landmark shift away from the traditional punk sounds of bands like the Ramones, Sex Pistols and X toward a more primal, aggressive and decidedly more *noisy* approach.

The high point of *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables* is its penultimate song, "Holiday in Cambodia," a different version of which was previously released as the band's second single. "Holiday in Cambodia" sounded unlike any punk rock song preceding it — hardcore or otherwise — thanks to its dark,

moody echoing guitar parts that were like a combination of instrumental surf, Ennio Morricone spaghetti western soundtrack and thrash music. Guitarist East Bay Ray incorporated a simple but surprisingly sophisticated approach that included chromatic riffs, dramatic octave lines, major and minor chord arpeggios and a good dose of power chord wallop.

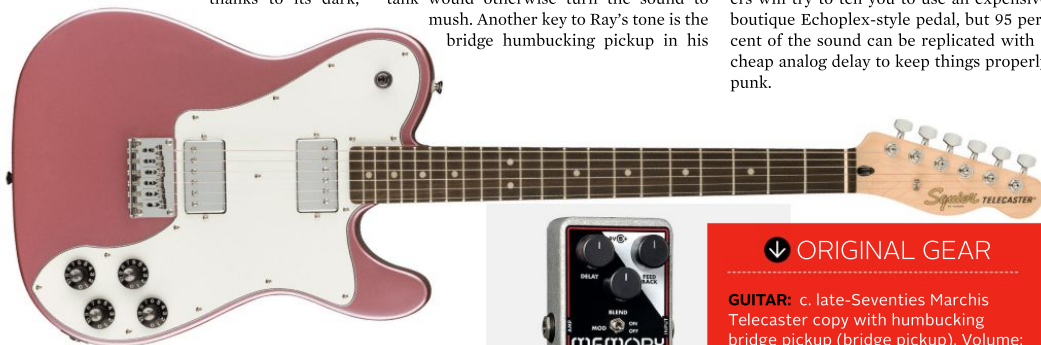
The Dead Kennedys bass/drums/guitar power trio lineup gave East Bay Ray plenty of space to fill, and instead of bashing out distorted barre chords, he often opted for a more ambient approach, using copious amounts of echo generated by his battered Maestro EP-3 Echoplex tape unit. There was nothing subtle about his use of echo, and combined with a decent amount of overdrive generated by his Fender Super Reverb he crafted a powerful sound that still managed to provide crystal clear twang.

The key to that clarity is to keep the amp's sound dry, as the Fender's reverb tank would otherwise turn the sound to mush. Another key to Ray's tone is the bridge humbucking pickup in his



Dead Kennedys' East Bay Ray on stage in San Francisco, September 2, 1978

cheap Japanese Telecaster knockoff. The 25.5-inch scale length enhances twang and attack, while the humbucker provides extra output that really comes into play during the barre chords on the chorus. Cork sniffers will try to tell you to use an expensive boutique Echoplex-style pedal, but 95 percent of the sound can be replicated with a cheap analog delay to keep things properly punk.



GET THE SOUND, CHEAP!

- Squier Affinity Series Telecaster Deluxe with laurel fingerboard
- Fender Pro Junior IV 1x10 combo
- Electro-Harmonix Memory Toy Analog Delay

tone tip: Use analog delay, not digital, for punk-approved grit and low-fi reverberation. The all-important delay/echo settings should be in the range of 290-300ms, four repeats and 30 percent blend.



ORIGINAL GEAR

GUITAR: c. late-Seventies Marchis Telecaster copy with humbucking bridge pickup (bridge pickup), Volume: 10, Tone: 10

AMP: c. 1964-67 Fender Super Reverb (Vibrato channel, Input 1, Bright On, Volume: 7, Treble: 7, Middle: 8, Bass: 4, Reverb: 0, Speed: 0, Intensity: 0) with four Oxford 10L6 10-inch speakers

EFFECTS: Maestro EP-3 Echoplex (Echo Delay: 16, Sustain: 4, Echo Volume: 3)

STRINGS/TUNING: Unknown (most likely Ernie Ball Slinky .010-.046)/standard

PICK: Unknown, most likely traditional teardrop heavy



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